WOMANS HANDIWORK

IN MODERN HOMES

William J. Murtagh

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INTERIOR - MORNING ROOM.

BY LOUIS C. TIFFANY

THE MATCH[illegible] NEW YORK

Woman's Handiwork in Modern Homes

BY

Constance Cary Harrison

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS AND FIVE COLORED PLATES FROM DESIGNS BY SAMUEL COLMAN, ROSINA EMMET, GEORGE GIBSON, AND OTHERS

Charles Scribner's Sons
1881
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"FOR, and this is at the root of the whole matter, everything made by man's hands has a form which must be either beautiful or ugly: beautiful, if it is in accord with Nature and helps her; ugly, if it is discordant with Nature and thwarts her; it cannot be indifferent. We for our parts are busy or sluggish, eager or unhappy, and our eyes are apt to get dulled to this eventfulness of form in these things which we are always looking at. Now, it is one of the chief uses of decoration, the chief part of its alliance with Nature, that it has to sharpen our dulled senses in matter: for this end are those wonders of intricate patterns interwoven, those strange forms invented, that men have so long delighted in: forms and intricacies that do not necessarily imitate Nature, but in which the hand of the craftsman is guided to work in the way that she does."

—*FROM WILLIAM MORRIS' ADDRESS ON THE DECORATIVE ARTS, THEIR RELATION TO MODERN LIFE AND PROGRESS.*

CONTENTS.

PART I.—EMBROIDERY.

PAGE

INTRODUCTION, ... 3

The Scheme of Decorative Needlework in England and America —Royal School of Art Needlework—Society of Decorative Art —Association of Decorative Artists, ... 3–10

THE GOVERNING RULES OF DECORATIVE ART, ... 10

APPROPRIATENESS AND COLOR, ... 10

DESIGN, ... 13

STITCHES, ANCIENT AND MODERN, ... 20

Opus Pulvinarium—Tent Stitch—Cross Stitch—Persian Cross Stitch—Vienna and Russian Cross Stitch—The Pelham Industry—Old Florentine Work on Silver Canvas, ... 20–24

Cushion Stitches for Grounds—Darning Stitches for Grounds—Queen Anne Work—Restoring Old Embroideries—Spanish Altar Frontals—Miss Townsend's Crewel Work, ... 24–28

Couching, or Laid Embroidery—Outline Couching—Plain Couching—Diaper Couching—Basket Stitch—Turkish, Portuguese, Spanish and Indian Work—Queen Elizabeth's Garters, . . 28–33

Opus Plumarium, or Feather Stitch—Renaissance Convent Embroidery—Stem Stitch—Split Stitch, ... 33–36

Satin Stitch, or French Plumetis—Blanket Stitch—Button-Hole Stitch—Montenegrin Work—French Knot—Chain Stitch—Antique Portuguese Bed Cover in Maize Silk on Cotton—Tambour Work—Twisted Chain Stitch—Point Russe—Holbein Stitch, ... 37–44

Opus Anglicum and other Ancient Stitches, ... 44–45

PAGE

TEXTILES USED FOR EMBROIDERY, ... 46

TRANSFERRING THE DESIGN, ... 50

GOLD IN TEXTILES AND EMBROIDERY, ... 52

Oriental Stuffs—Roman Winding Sheets—Old and New Indian, Cretan and Turkish Embroideries—Gold Muslins at the Court of the First Napoleon—Gold Thread—Bullion, Passing, etc., . 52–54

CREWELS, SILKS, ETC., ... 55

FRAMES, ... 56

FRINGES FOR NEEDLEWORK, ... 57

APPLIQUÉ, ... 58

Specimen of Venetian Cinque Cento *Appliqué*—Mode of Working—Cord and Cockle-Shell Pattern of the Iron Cross in France—Modern French Work—Curtains Designed by the Princess Louise—*Appliqué* Oranges on Blue English Serge—Lady Ashburton's Curtains—Fawn Plush Curtains for a New York Drawing-Room—*Appliqué* Panel, by Mrs. Wheeler—*Portière* with American Azaleas—*Portière*, with *Appliqué* Design, from Spencer's Epithalamium—Library *Portière* with Heraldic Device in *Appliqué*, ... 58–68

OUTLINE WORK, ... 69

Miss Wheeler's Designs—Pattern from Bed-Drapery at Hardwick Hall—Outline Work on Unbleached Stuffs—Doyleys—Landscape Panels—Bed Covers—Pillow Covers—Panels for Wall or Piano—*Portière* of Garnet Velvet—Morning Room Curtains in India Silk—Union League Club-House *Portière*—Stuffed Embroidery Outlined in Silk, ... 69–75

TREATMENT OF EMBROIDERIES, WHEN FINISHED, ... 75

Banner Screen made up at Home—Washing Crewel Embroidery on Linen or Crash, ... 75–77

DRAWN WORK, OLD AND NEW, ... 78

The Earliest Known Attempts at Lace—Spanish Deshilado—Italian *Punto Tirato*—French Point-Tiré—Mexican and South American Drawn-Work—Directions for Drawn-Work Stitches, 78–85

OPUS ARANEUM, OR SPIDERWORK, ... 85

Old English Darned Netting—Italian Punto a Maglia—Specimens at Metropolitan Museum—Florentine Table Covers with Darned Borders—Spanish *Randa*—Modern *Guipure d'Art*, . 85–87

PAGE

Cut-Work, or Point Coupé, ... 88

Its Uses During the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries—Queen Elizabeth's Taste for Cut-work—German Pattern Books—Swedish Hölesom—Modern Point Coupé, ... 88–90

Macramé Lace, ... 90–92

Point and Pillow Laces, ... 92–95

PART II.—BRUSH AND PIGMENT.

China Painting, with Directions for Beginners, ... 99

Painting on Pottery Underglaze—Modern Fancy for Faïence in Decoration—Fortuny's Hispano-Moresco Lustred Pottery—Reproductions of Henri Deux Faïence—Mr. Colman's Collection of Chinese Vases in High Glaze—Minton's Revival of Old Italian Majolica—Doulton & Watt's Pottery—Swiss Faïence—Fünfkirchen (Hungarian) Faïence—Russian Decorated Pottery—Modern Italian Faïence—Laurin, or Bourg-la-Reine Ware—Limoges Faïence—Deck Plaques, Vases, and Lamps—Bennett's Faïence—Work Done by Bennett's Pupils—Volkmar's Faïence—Work of Volkmar's Pupils at the Society of Decorative Art—Miss McLaughlin's Faïence—Mrs. George Ward Nichol's Faïence—Miss Rosina Emmet's Portrait Plaques—Ivory Ware Made and Decorated by the Misses Whitney and Chandler, of Lancaster, Mass.—Work of Graduates of the Cooper Union Art School—Incised Pottery by Miss Annie Lee—Lamps, by Mrs. E. Wickes—Suggestions for Tiles, Plaques, etc., ... 97–114

Water-Colors on Silk or Satin, ... 115

Fan Painting, ... 117

Oil-Colors on Silk or Satin, ... 118

Oil-Colors on Plush, ... 119

Water-Colors on Sateen, ... 119

Painting on Coarse Brown Paper, ... 120

Water-Colors on Linen, ... 120

Painting on Tapestry, ... 121

Painting on Mirrors, ... 122

PAGE

PAINTING ON GILDED CANVAS, ... 122

DECORATED PALETTES, ... 123

MENUS AND DINNER CARDS, ... 124

ETCHING ON LINEN, ... 126

PANEL PAINTING, ... 128

PAINTING ON WOOD WITH WATER-COLORS, ... 129

PAINTED TABLES, ... 130

PART III.—MODERN HOMES.

HINTS FOR DECORATION, ... 133

Walls—Floors—Rugs and Carpets—Old Marble Mantel-Pieces—Book-Shelves—Brackets, etc.—The Living-Room—The Dining-Room—Bed-Room Furniture, after Mr. McKim's Designs—Eastlake and Queen Anne—Chippendale, Sheraton and Adam—Marquetry and Yorkshire Oak—Boule and Indian Teak—Mr. Bigelow's Old Colony Interiors—Stuffs for Covering Furniture—Mr. Yandell's Stamped Leathers and Plushes—Mr. Tiffany's Mosaic Glass for Window-Screens, . . . 136–145

WOOD-CARVING, ... 145

The Wood-Carving Industries of Cincinnati—Furniture Decorated by Women Amateurs, ... 145–148

SCREENS, ... 149

Their Uses—Screens of Osier—Of Arras—Of Gilded Leather—Louis XV. Screen—Chippendale Fire-Screens—Old Screens of Crimson Velvet with Silver Wire at Hardwick Hall—Gérome's Screen of Golden Lacquer—Screens of Chinese Embroidery on Silk—Of Japanese Embroidery—Or Painting in Water-Color—Screens from the Royal School of Art Needlework—Screens from the Society of Decorative Art, with Directions for Making, and Examples, ... 149–159

PORTIÈRES, ... 160

Hanging for the Tabernacle Door—Oriental and French *Portières*—Mr. Colman's Experiments in Japanese Brocades—Gondola Carpet, Wrought in Silver, Used as a *Portière*—Mr. Colman's Curtain Worked by the Society of Decorative Art—Kelim—Turcoman—Tapestry—Plush and Serge Draperies—Embroidered *Portières* and Cashmere Shawls as Door Hangings, ... 160–168

PAGE

THE MANTEL-SHELF, ... 169

Successful Make-Shifts and Suggestions for Variety in Decoration —Mantel Lambrequin on Turkish Satin with Cinque Cento Design—Miss Merry's "Grandmother's Crewel-Work," for the Society of Decorative Art—Old Dutch Fire-Place Decorations—Mantel-Shelf Curtains, etc., etc., ... 169–175

PIANO DECORATION AND DRAPERY, ... 176

What to do with Odds and Ends of Rare Embroidery—Scarfs of India Cotton or of Roman Silk—Japanese Brocades, or Portuguese Floss Work—Turkish or Algerian Work—Embroidered Panels and Piano-Covers, ... 176

THE DECORATION OF OUR DOORS, ... 177

Kakemonos and Prayer-Carpets—Embroidered Door-Hanging to Lie Flat Upon the Panels—Painted Panels—Stencilled Ornaments on Door-Frame and Panels—Decoration of the Nursery Doors, ... 177–182

JAPANESE ART IN DECORATION, ... 182

Fans, Umbrellas, Lanterns, and Kakemonos—Japanese Lacquered Furniture, and Japanese Stuffs—Porcelain and Glaze, . . 182–186

THIN CURTAINS FOR THE DRAWING-ROOM, ... 186

Madras Curtains—India Mulls—Cream Muslins, with Hair Stripes of Red and Blue—Muslin with Insertions of Antique Lace—Modern Nottingham Lace—Scrym—Strainer-Cloth, etc., . 186–188

EMBROIDERED DRAPERIES OF INDIA MULL, ... 189

EMBROIDERED WINDOW-SHADES, ... 189

In Buff or Gray Linen—Puffed Shades—Crimson Holland Shades —Striped Gray and White Linen Shades, etc., . . . 189–190

DRAWING-ROOM CHAIRS, ... 190

Louis XV. and Cromwell Chairs—Tudor and Wakefield Rattan—Chinese Bamboo—Market Harborough and Shaker Chairs—Embroidered Rugs—Cushions and Covers, ... 190–194

ODDS AND ENDS, ... 194

Odds and Ends of Drawing-Room Decoration—A Wood-Basket—Sofa-Cushions—Tidies—Bell-Pulls—Lamps, Candles, Shades —Cinderella's Slippers—Bandanna Waste-Baskets—Indian Sweet-Grass Baskets from Mount Desert—Silk-Rag Curtains, 194–200

PAGE

Embroidered Umbrellas—Aprons—Bags—Reticules—Sachets—Table-Cover—Lambrequins—Candle-Stand Covers—Lounging-Chair—Rattan Waste-Basket—Banner-Screen with Owls in Council—Drapery for Bracket—Sofa-Cushion—Gilt Wicker Basket—Purse Work Bags—Crib-Cover with Motto—Crib-Blanket—Baby's Carriage Outfit—Splash Curtains—Bonnet-Baskets—Clothes-Basket—Shoe Bags and Boxes—Pin-Cushions—Toilet-Covers, and Duchesse Dressing-Table, . . 200–211

In Tea-Cup Time, ... 212

Gossip about Tea-Drinkers—Elia and Cousin Bridget—Sairey Gamp and Betsey Prig—Matthew Arnold, George Sand, and Thomas Hughes—The Five O'clock Tea-Table—Its Equipage and Appurtenances—Embroidered Tea-Cloth—Queen Charlotte's Tea-Table—Trefoil Tables—Lamp-Tables, etc., etc., . 212–219

Decorations of the Dinner-Table, ... 220

Old Times and New—Dîner à la Russe—The Modern Châtelaine—Tables—Cloths—Service Decoration—Lights, etc., . . 220

A Couleur de Rose Dinner—Old Blue and Early Jonquils—The Centre-Piece and Dessert—Table-Mirrors—Modern Dresden Ware—Cut Glass—Modern Venice Glass—Bohemian Glass—French Enamelled Glass from Jean at Sêvres—Bombay Striped Glass—Stourbridge Glass—Canton and Copeland—Minton's Plates—Oriental China, and the After-Dinner Coffee-Service, ... 224–235

List of Illustrations.

COLORED PLATES.

PAGE

Interior—Morning-Room, by Louis C. Tiffany, . . *Frontispiece.*
(*Reproduced by Hatch Lith. Co., from Drawing by George Gibson.*)

Doorway and Drapery, by Louis C. Tiffany, ... 58
(*Reproduced by Hatch Lith. Co., from Drawing by George Gibson.*)

Faïence and Porcelain, by Bennett, Volkmar, etc., . . . 99
(*Reproduced by Hatch Lith. Co., from Drawing by George Gibson.*)

Portrait Plaque, by Miss Rosina Emmet, ... 111
(*Reproduced by Hatch Lith. Co.*)

Sketch of Portière, by Samuel Colman, ... 160
(*Reproduced by N. Y. Lith. Co.*)

ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE TEXT.

Leaves and Flowers of the Dogtooth Violet, Conventionalized and Adapted to Embroidery, by a pupil of the Cooper Union Art School, ... 19

Stitches Used in Art Embroidery—

Tent Stitch, 20; *Cross Stitch*, 21; *Persian Cross Stitch*, 22; *Cushion Stitch*, 24; *Darning Stitch*, 26; *Outline Couching*, 28; *Plain Couching*, 29; *Diaper Couching*, 30; *Basket Stitch*, 31; *Feather Stitch* (*Old Opus Plumarium*), 33; *Stem Stitch*, 35; *Satin Stitch*, 37; *Blanket Stitch*, 38; *French Knot*, 39; *Chain Stitch*, 40; *Twisted Chain Stitch*, 43.

Cinque-Cento Appliqué, from the Collection of Watson & Co., . 60

Embroidered Disks for Inlaid Appliqué, by Mrs. Wheeler, . 62

Embroidered Disks for Inlaid Appliqué, by Mrs. Wheeler, . 63

Design for Embroidery, Conventionalized Lily Leaves, . . 68

Panel for Outline Embroidery, by Miss Dora Wheeler, . . 70

PAGE

Design for Outline Embroidery, from Bed-Drapery at Hardwick Hall, ... 71
Spray for Embroidery—Buttercups, ... 77
Design for Drawn-Work—Buffet Cover, ... 78
Old Deshilado, or Spanish Drawn-Work, Embroidered in Colored Floss, Imported by Mr. Chadwick, . . . 80
Old Punto Tirato, or Italian Drawn-Work, ... 81
Drawn-Work Stitches, ... 83
Drawn-Work Stitches, ... 84
Spray for Embroidery—Wheat-Ears, ... 87
Macramé Lace (Old Italian), ... 90
Macramé Lace (Modern), ... 91
Spray for Embroidery—Blackberries, ... 95
Limoges Jug and Drapery, ... 114
"—— *This Fan, My Grandmother's*," 117
Chintz-Curtains, Parting over a Jardinière, ... 140
Tea-Screen, by Miss Dora Wheeler, ... 149
Folding-Screen, by George Gibson, ... 153
Banner-Screen from the Society of Decorative Art, . . 159
Portière for Hall, ... 162
Mantel-Piece Decorated at Home, ... 170
Crétonne Drapery for Mantel-Piece. 173
Over-Door Decoration, ... 178
Over-Door Decoration, ... 182
Decorated Door-Panels, ... 180
Design for Embroidered Chair-Cover or Cushion—Periwinkle, 190
Design for Embroidered Chair-Cover or Cushion—Iris, . . 191
Design for Embroidery—Indian Corn, ... 219
Spray for Embroidery, ... 235

PART I.

EMBROIDERY.

"Elle addonnoit son courage
A faire maint bel ouvrage
Dessus la toile, et encor
A joindre la soye et l'or."
—*Ode to "La Reine Margot," by* RONSARD.

"The spirits of Ariadne and Penelope reign vivid in all the work."
—RUSKIN.

"Her days did pass
In working with the needle curiously."
—TAYLOR'S "*Katherine of Aragon.*"

"Exquisite with her needle."
—*Epitaph of* CATHERINE SLOPER, *buried in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey*, 1620.

EMBROIDERY.

INTRODUCTION.

THE Decorative Needlework of which so much has been said and written, of late, is a revival of old-time industries. Begun in London in 1872, this conjuration of forgotten needlecraft was chiefly due to the exertions of a lady moved to pity by the sad fate of a young governess who was found drowned in the Thames — desperate after a long struggle for livelihood in the only career open to her. The idea of creating a school for needlework of the higher ornamental class, thus prompted, has directed into a new channel the efforts of many women disqualified, by delicate health or for other reasons, for self-support by occupations requiring long-continued exertion, mental or physical.

The Royal School of Art Needlework, first established in a small room over a shop in a side-street, is to-day a great and beneficent institution, occupying permanent quarters at South Kensington. Rare and elaborate specimens of antique embroidery, with their beautiful designs and multiplicity of stitches, are there restored or imitated, to decorate the wealthy homes of modern England; while the fresh designs of contemporaneous artists are constantly employed in the production of such examples as those made generally known in America by the Centennial Exhibition in 1876.

The details of difficulties overcome in the early days of this enterprise are full of interest. Crewels had not been manufactured for years, and were unattainable. The first worsted used for experiments in art-embroidery was what is known as carpet "thrums"—the waste left in weaving carpets—and was worked upon pieces of coarse crash or linen. Hence the "tidies" familiar to all of us, made for the purpose of utilizing embroidery lavished upon these experiments.

It is, in like manner, to the influence of an accomplished and benevolent woman that the Society of Decorative Art in New York owes its origin. The success of Mrs. Wheeler's project to establish here a nursery for developing and training a taste for artistic handiwork among self-supporting women has long been assured, and has been the occasion for like enterprises in various places in other parts of the country. Under the wise and vigorous rule characterizing this society from the outset, work has been done which rivals that of the parent school at Kensington. Too much cannot be said for the high standard the society has maintained, or for the unwearying effort to so direct native talent among contributors as to place them in relations at once dignified and remunerative with the buying public. With a strong hold on the interest of controlling spirits in a liberal community, with aid freely given by artists and by the members of many active committees, with thorough training in the various departments by the best available experts—notably the classes in needlework under charge of Mrs. Pode—the Society of Decorative Art well deserves the honorable eminence it has attained.

Perhaps the broadest, most original and richest development of industrial arts applied to house-decoration yet seen

in America, however, is from a little band of associated artists, who, headed by Mr. Louis C. Tiffany, have only recently established an atelier in New York. Their work is as yet little known to the general public, and has been executed chiefly for luxurious interiors intended to show every detail harmonized according to the highest standard of decorative art. It is marked by daring fancies in color and design ; by the free use and combination of rich materials ; by the adaptation of native American forms of flowers and plants to conventionalized ornament ; and by the introduction, wherever possible, of American glass, woods, metals and textiles. It has more than once been said, in reference to Mr. Tiffany's brilliant achievements in mosaic windows, that those decorators of church or dwelling who have crossed the Atlantic in search of stained glass may well wish they had bought at home. The same remark may be made with regard to the other products of this new school of American art-industry. For them, some of our leading artists are put under contribution for designs upon which the best resources of individual effort are bestowed.

Like the artists who combined their forces to usher in the glorious Renaissance, here we have men who elevate the decorative scheme by breathing into it their own fancy, knowledge, spirit and literary culture, men able both to conceive and to execute.

Allied with these associate artists is Mrs. Wheeler, whose talent and energy, contributed during several years to the Society of Decorative Art, are now as worthily occupied in another field. Those who have seen the beautiful drop curtain of the Madison Square Theatre, some of the draperies for the new Union League Club House, or the hangings for the Veterans' Room of the Seventh Regiment Armory,

need not be told how far, in her hands, original design in finest needlework has already been carried.

The four plush window-curtains for the Veterans' Room at the Armory are made two of Damascus red, two of antique blue. A network of gilded leather is embroidered upon the plush, leaving flame-shaped interstices like the slashings of an ancient doublet. The portière is of Japanese brocade, bordered with plush representing leopard skin. Upon the main body of the portière are laid *appliqués* of velvet in small squares, each exhibiting a design taken from the days of knighthood and romantic warfare. Over the intermediate spaces of brocade are sewn tiny rings of steel, representing the surface of a coat of mail.

A drawing-room, recently decorated by Mr. Tiffany, contains a portière designed to accord with an interior suggesting the suburbs of storied Granada rather than modern Fifth Avenue. This sumptuous hanging, made of opalescent plushes, is, like the moonstone, full of imprisoned light. A mass of fine embroidery, in gold and silk, surrounds underlet disks of satin containing old Greek needlework incorporated into the stuff by many skilful stitches. The whole is a feast of fleeting color—whether rose or azure, cream or gold, the eye fails to decide.

From the same atelier have come friezes painted upon canvas of dead gold or silver, or embroidered upon lustrous plush ; wall panellings, inlaid with wood or metal like old Italian marquetry, or carved in mahogany and oak ; designs for floors and furniture ; draperies in rich variety ; and windows

> "Diamonded with panes of quaint device,
> Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
> As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings."

In the various departments of both the schools mentioned it is pleasant to see bright, enthusiastic women busy all day long with pen or brush or needle, loving their work for the work's sake, and counting it no hardship "to labor in the vineyards on the slopes."

"Few people of the present day," says Canon Rock, "have a just idea of the labor, the money, and the length of time often bestowed of old upon embroideries which had been sketched as well as wrought by the hands of men, each in his own craft the ablest and most cunning of his time." The work of Paola da Verona, a "man of incomparable ingenuity," who spent twenty-six years on one piece of embroidery "on gold-wove velvet," is an example. Paola evidently did not think of himself as having but a span-long life, and gave no heed to the burden of the old song:

> "Could a man be secure
> That his life would endure,
> As of old, for a thousand long years,
> What things might he know!
> What deeds might he do!
> And all without hurry or cares"—

which is gravely quoted by Herbert Spencer in one of his memorable essays in philosophy. Certainly there has been nothing in the period just passed to inspire the present generation with any special respect for an accomplishment debased to the level of such worsted work on canvas as was then most familiar to their eyes.

We need not wonder that the art we are now discussing is ancient, or that it long ago attained an excellence not surpassed, if equalled, recently. Writers of sociology have

observed not only that decoration precedes dress, in order of time, but that the facts of aboriginal life seem to show that dress is developed out of decorations. Garments have often been devised for the special parade of ornament; and even now, and among ourselves, utility and convenience in costume are frequently subordinated to appearance. It is remarked that, until civilization has exercised the largest influence upon habits, personal adornment occupies the attention of both sexes equally; it is undoubtedly true that, since history began, the skill of workers in embroidery has been taxed for embellishment of the habiliments of the priests of ceremonial religions, quite as much as for the gauds of fair women or the pomps and pageants of imperial courts. In every country where the populace has been accessible to control by subjugating the senses, in all ages when it has been possible to excite respect, awe and reverence by elaborate beauty in dress, the priesthood has asserted a supremacy by display of the most imposing apparel; and the student of needlecraft will find that, not only the choicest examples of very old work preserved until to-day, but the richest and most famous we have any account of, were raiments or draperies used by priests. The ecclesiastics of Europe bestowed universal attention upon these matters when the Church was at the height of her temporal glory, and the ponderous Latin names they gave to many stitches are still pedantically employed by writers of standard treatises on these subjects. The taste for the triumphs of decorative needlework was for a time discredited in this utilitarian age of the steam-engine and the spinning-jenny, but, as we have said, has now revived—even as, after the great daily newspapers, the telegraph and the nervous hurry of work-a-day life had almost banished oratory to

the limbo of lost arts, there has been witnessed the rise and growth of the Lecture Bureau and the Lyceum.

In what here follows we do what we can, in the space allowed us, to make clear the methods of woman's handiwork in an art exercised, to-day and in America, rather for the garnishment of homes than upon trappings for the person. It is with the hope of interesting those who have not yet turned their attention to the subject, as well as of stimulating those who have, that these pages are written. Thorough technical directions cannot be looked for in a treatise of this kind; and it is suggested that, wherever practicable, a course of lessons be taken in the stitches described. The samplers, with materials and directions for work, sent out by the Society of Decorative Art, are not the least successful among many schemes adopted by that association for diffusing its usefulness.

In describing the pieces of antique and modern embroidery mentioned throughout the book, most of which have received careful personal investigation, the writer has a double purpose: first, of suggesting models of infinite value in forming the taste of the student; and again, of calling attention to the fact that to-day, in New York, we need only expend sufficient time and interest to be able to inspect and handle admirable specimens bearing the sign-manual of many ages and nations. An axiom of Carolus Duran is: "Educate the eye before you educate the hand. The hand will become cunning soon enough when the eye has learned to see, whereas if the hand be educated before the eye, one may never see." In this way lessons may be acquired better than any that are taught in schools.

In order to properly define the distinct decorative purpose and the limitations of Art Embroidery, let us begin

with the first important consideration of *appropriateness* of ornament to the object it is to be applied to.

APPROPRIATENESS AND COLOR.

The governing rules of decorative art reverse the order of those essential to pictorial art.

First, *appropriateness* of ornament to the object to which we mean to apply it. The material, surroundings and uses of our proposed piece of handiwork must harmonize, or our best labor is in vain.

Second, *color*, massed with effect and detailed with care.

Third, *design* or drawing.

To understand this ordering, we should consult the decorative work of the Orientals, who, with their fearless intermixture of intense colors, contrive to produce such astonishing effects that, while unable to grasp at the details of design, we remain revelling in the enjoyment of color lavished without stint and without apparent rule. The combinations and oppositions of tones in some of these specimens restrain criticism of their grotesque designs. As mere pictures, we would laugh at them; but as examples of pure decorative art, they are often admirable. A service of Chinese porcelain in Mr. Prime's collection, illustrates this. Each piece has upon it a chocolate-colored duck with gilded wings, standing on a rock of brilliant rose-color, in the neighborhood of a turquoise-blue vase holding flowers of deep claret, pale rose, lemon-yellow, brown and gold, with green leaves. The whole group is supported on an acanthus leaf of bleu-de-roi, veined with black and green.

Among modern artists, Deck, the great potter, excels in

color as in glaze. Whether the tint chosen be heart's-ease purple, mandarin yellow, turquoise-blue or green, its beautiful quality makes the color in itself a sufficient pleasure, in his specimens.

"Where the representation of objects is ideal or conventional, the color is likewise conventional," says Racinet, "and the ornamentalist remains master of his palette. The severity of the design is thus redeemed by liberty in chromatics—that is to say, by the advantage of being able to choose and arrange the colors at will, without any necessity for resemblance or even for probability, but merely observing the laws of harmony."

In setting about a piece of embroidery, our first effort should be to harmonize the colors, allowing the ground tint to control the general tone. Make no attempt to reproduce exactly the flowers of nature, in what Ruskin calls "the culture of the tulip in silk and silver thread." It is impossible to portray an open-air blossom springing in a parterre, watered with dew, and bathed in sunlight that strikes through its diaphanous petals. The experiment will assuredly end in failure; and your pure colors will have assumed a gaudy garishness when you look at them indoors transferred to needlework. Take from the flowers such of their qualities of form or color as serve your (decorative) purpose, and neglect the other qualities. In suggesting the form or color of a flower and modifying it to such a general scheme, you do not compete with nature in such of her effects as it is impossible to imitate successfully with the materials at your command. Therefore avoid comparisons that would be fatal, and, in such modification and selection, you introduce a human element of thought or imagination which, according to its power, will prove

attractive. "Symbolic expression appeals altogether to thoughts, and in no way trusts to realization."

To this end, and for your better guidance, are assorted the shades of modern crewels. Their variations in one key of color will aid you to apply the suggestions of nature, rather than attempt to convey with the needle those delicate gradations of tint, that evanescence of bloom, so difficult even for the skilled brush of the flower-painter.

Color decoration should be flat, the lights and shadows kept in check by the continuity of the surface. All abrupt transitions are to be avoided; and the color should be laid on in masses, rather than scattered and infinitely divided. The same flower, repeated in all its aspects, is far more agreeable and less confusing to the eye, than a gay kaleidoscopic representation of many-tinted blossoms. Contrast the works of art of quondam florists, the patchwork baskets and bouquets of varied hues, with the sumptuous modern assembling of Maréchal Neil or glowing Jacqueminot roses, the reigning tint unbroken save by some afterthought of alien yet harmonious color—an artist's "accident!"

After all, color is a thing apart, an inspiration, and the rules laid down by its philosophy must be governed by the artist's intuition. In combining tints for embroidery, as in choosing stuffs to bring together for their background, tone them as you do colors on your palette; and experiment with combinations before deciding upon a matter of so much consequence.

In the magnificent specimens of early Persian art, whence the most emphatic lessons in decorative coloring are to be had, the general rule has been well said to be: "A silhouette drawing with geometrical outlines, relieved by conventional coloring on a dominant and generating

ground. Attention to this rule produces brilliancy and repose, when the design is well combined and the colors happily chosen. The varied scales rise from the color of the ground, either black, white slightly tinted, blue, red, yellow or flesh-color, with mediums of isolation and union, varied according to the nature of the production, but always aided by flat tints and with striking outlines of every shade, from black to white, according to circumstances."

DESIGN.

"There are three processes in the production of ornament: the drawing or design, coloring and relief.

"By the help of these means, the two first of which are especially to occupy our attention, the artist may obtain the most varied results, all coming, however, within the three following categories:

"1st. The *invention* of subjects purely imaginary, foreign to the productions of nature.

"2d. The *conventional representation* of natural objects, expressed merely in their essential characters, and under generalized types.

"3d. The *imitative representation* of objects, in which nature is followed both as regards design and coloring.

"The first, which borrows nothing from the imitative arts, appears to a certain degree in every style, and in every period. The lineal and geometric combinations (interlacings, meanders and roses) which are its primitive basis, respond to the faculties of order and measure which are to be found in every human brain; being the direct productions of pure imagination, they create that which had no existence. Although this style occupies a more

important place in the art of certain nations, such as the Arabs or Anglo-Saxons, yet in none is it wholly wanting. Whether apparent or not, this geometric process forms the basis of the greater number of ornamental compositions.

"The second, the conventional representation, which is a link between the two others and is frequently mixed with the first, resembles this first style to some degree in the domain of creative invention by its faculty of idealizing—that is, of generalizing under the form of archetypes, and of appropriating the models taken from nature. It is by this idealized imitation that the artist, according to the happy expression of M. Charles Blanc, enters into the grandeur of universal life, and it is from this style that we may expect the highest type of ornament.

"As to the purely *imitative* representation of objects, it is when approaching modern times that we most frequently meet with this individualizing style, the especial aim of which is to give the most exact rendering of the object represented, to express it with all its accidental modifications, reliefs and shades of color."

The temptation to give, in full, these sentences from M. Racinet's superb work on Polychromatic Ornament, is supported by a belief that the student will find them of the utmost value in elucidating the three terms so frequently recurring in all lessons of decorative art, viz.: "geometric," "conventional," and "naturalistic," treatment of subjects intended for ornamental purposes.

The study of geometric combinations should be the groundwork of our efforts at design. A few simple forms are, upon analysis, the basis of all decorative art work. The Arabs, considering themselves forbidden by the Koran

to depict the forms of created things,* had recourse to geometric construction, from which sprang their famous rose-work, a perfect interlacing of pure and distinct lines, taking a common root in the ornament itself. The severe beauty of these incomparable traceries has bestowed the name "arabesque" upon all that class of ornament. A study both useful and fascinating is the division of a surface into spaces that may be subdivided by decoration, the composition of a border made by placing side by side similar alternating figures, and the formation of a single complete design. To assist us in construction, we have the triangle, the square, the pentagon, the circle and their multiples and combinations.

Conventional ornament, "the impress of the human mind on nature," seems to be the stumbling-block of most beginners. A study of ancient potteries, textiles and illuminations, and indeed of all by-gone art, will help us to understand how, among all nations, conventionalized forms were gradually developed from nature, with progressive art.

The Greek flora used in ornament adopt merely the general characteristics of plants; yet, amid the beautiful designs applied alike to architecture and vases, one can easily discern the ivy, the aloe, the vine and laurel. Old Indian stuffs and enamels are rich in suggestions of conventionalized flowers, the marguerite or daisy reappearing constantly. Persian fabrics show a treatment steering a middle course between nature and conventionalism. The Persians,

* "The prohibition of the Koran to represent animated beings is, however, not so strict as is generally supposed; it is reduced to the following sentences: "O Believers! Wine and games of chance, and statues and the divining arrows, are only an abomination of Satan's works! Avoid them, that ye may prosper. (Sura, v, verse 92.)" *Riaño's Spanish Art.*

so loving flowers that the yearly blossoming of the tulip is among them celebrated by a festival, took delight in interweaving with their graceful arabesques, a "whole botanical world" set free for the purposes of ornament. A specimen of flesh-colored linen of early Persian manufacture shows large radiating flowers of many varieties coming from a common stem; pomegranates, pinks, honeysuckles, roses, hyacinths and tulips, with birds and animals, are represented in tints of salmon-red and blue, relieved by yellow.

In fifteenth century manuscripts may be found the loveliest of all conventional flower-work, studded with jewels. Upon the illuminated margin of a MS. attributed to Jean Foucquet, appear, on lozenge-shaped panels of gold (alternating with the same shapes in cream-color, gracefully arabesqued with blue and gold), the rose, the pansy, the pink, the lily, the narcissus—the strawberry with bud, blossom, half-ripe berry and perfected fruit. All of these are so drawn as to give only a suggestion of the forms of nature; and the result is a blaze of color and a combination of graceful shapes, worthy to be inscribed with the title "La Légende Dorée," which they illustrate.

Happy the student of art needlework whose correct knowledge of drawing enables her to sketch her designs upon the material! She may thus impart a vigor and freedom that even unequal stitches are powerless to dispel entirely. And when the design has the additional merit of being original, one's gain in satisfaction in the labor is immense. Due study of the balance of masses and lines is requisite in this interesting pursuit; and it would be wise to bear always in mind Couture's teaching: "When we touch true art, you will see that the art of drawing surpasses everything."

This is sound doctrine, and may be accepted as the foundation-stone on which to rear our superstructure.

The decorator who works with a true sense of the characteristics of a natural object gives only its general features, observing the proportions, adjusting the symmetry of the parts, and, though producing no two effects exactly similar, but rather, with a varying mind, adding a "changing grace and differing beauty" at every turn, yet purposely discarding unessential details. Regularity and symmetry are the normal laws of growth; "nature is developed in strict geometrical and numerical rhythm, while all that is irregular is accidental and extraneous;" and in observing this distinction lies the difference between decorative and pictorial art.

In studying for embroidery-design, choose, then, flowers such as daffodils, azaleas, or any of the lily family. Daisies, too, are clear and well defined, and sunflowers need little arrangement to convert them into the rather rigid forms preferred for conventional decoration; apple-blossoms, wild-rose, cherry and bramble make delightful subjects for study. Whatever be your selection, note carefully its distinguishing characteristics of shape, growth, leaves and stalk. Draw it, with the leaves, in a variety of positions—full-front, profile, foreshortened, etc. Modify the details for embroidery, by omitting the exquisite minutiæ of Nature's finish. By all means retain the chief veining of the leaves, upon which they depend for life and vigor.

Do not group your flowers in a stiff bouquet, but try the easy and natural sweep of a bough or a vine coming from one side, or the upright shooting of a stalk from its mother earth. In inserting leaves, do not crowd them about the stems; and give the flowers full room to detach themselves

from the background of your embroidery. Buds, stipules and leaflets are useful additions to a composition of this kind.

Birds and butterflies may be introduced into embroidery designs, with excellent effect in giving animation to the whole, and for the purpose of affording relief in color.

The Woman's Art School of the Cooper Union, under the gracious and fostering care of Mrs. Susan N. Carter, was the first established systematic course of study for design and decorative purposes in New York, and was planned by Mrs. Carter after a thorough examination of the methods of such work in most efficient operation in European schools. It has been an entire success; and, since the close of the first year, hundreds of her pupils have gone out to teach as they were taught, in public and in private schools. Thousands of children, thus brought under the influence of the graduates of the Cooper Union, are being educated in the important practice of design, and a large proportion of the embellishment of life in our community and country is directly attributable to the admirable training of this school.

Leaves and Flowers of the Dogtooth Violet, conventionalized and adapted to Embroidery.
By a Pupil of the School of Design, Cooper Union.

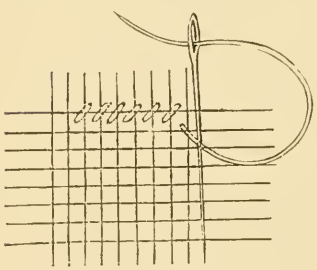
STITCHES, ANCIENT AND MODERN.

"Tent work, raised work, laid work, frost work, net work,
Most curious pearls and rare Italian cut work,
Fine fern stitch, finny stitch, new stitch and chain stitch,
Brave bred stitch, fisher stitch, Irish stitch and queen stitch,
The Spanish stitch, rosemary stitch, herring-bone and maw stitch,
The smarting whip stitch, back stitch, and cross stitch."

—THE NEEDLE.

THE technical name, *Opus pulvinarium,* bestowed by ecclesiastics, in the thirteenth century, upon this class of embroidery, includes all work upon canvas where the threads of the material regulate the length and position of the stitches.

Tent stitch, the *premier pas* in sampler work, is that in which the thread, coming from beneath, is carried over a single cross of the warp and woof of the material.

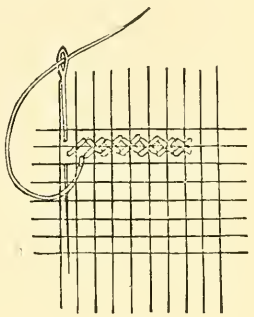


Tent Stitch.

This is still beautifully done by French embroiderers, who have lately reproduced some striking effects of antique tapestry in tent stitch, with crewels, on a ground of sage or of Pompeian red velvet, for portières.

Cross stitch, (a continuation of tent stitch, where the thread is brought up again to the surface and crossed over

the first stitch taken,) although temporarily out of favor, after long years of subservience to the poor and gaudy patterns in Berlin worsteds, has done noble service in the history of aristocratic needlework. The superb hand tapestries of Venice and Florence, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and those wrought behind convent bars and in historical chateaux and castles in France and England, as well as the specimens religiously preserved by other European nations, seem to bring us in actual contact with life after the fashion of those periods, as nothing else can. One scents the atmosphere of an ancient court in approaching them, and goes away on tiptoe!



Cross Stitch.

To many of us, cross stitch is chiefly interesting through association with the samplers to be found in many old homes of England and America—waifs that have fluttered down like withered rose-leaves from the pages of some long-forgotten book. At

> "Hardwick Hall,
> More glass than wall,"

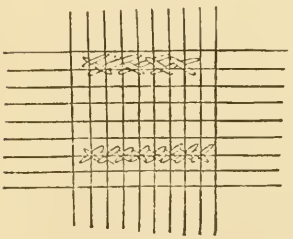
the many-windowed mansion of the Marquis of Hartington, in Derbyshire, are to be seen, among rich stores of ancient needlework, samplers framed and glazed with other pieces of hand-wrought tapestry, applied to furniture. Much of this work was the solace of Mary Queen of Scots, during her imprisonment in charge of the Earl and Countess of Shrewsbury. "I asked hir grace," says White, the chronicler, "Sence the wether did cutt of all exercises

abrode, how passed the tyme within? She sayd that all the day she wrought with hir nydill, and that the diversitie of the colors made the worke seme lesse tedious, and contynued so long at it till veray payn made hir give over; and with that laid hir hand upon hir left syde, and complayned of an old grief newely increased there." Poor Queen Mary! No wonder so much embroidery is attributed to her, if she "wrought with hir nydill" to drive away the "old grief" in her heart!

In Maryland and Virginia the visitor is shown, with pride, samplers, in tints of "late delayed faint roses," hung upon wainscoting from nails driven there a century ago, and fire-screens, "done by the fingers fair of great-Aunt Dorothy." What demure wasp-waisted females these works of antique art display! What foppish gallants! What trite remarks, in text both great and small, embellish them!

Thus does cross stitch link us with the past, and but for its decadence in the hands of Berlin worsted workers might still have held its own.

The Persian, Cretan and Algerian embroideries are executed chiefly in the varieties of cross stitch; and very rich effects are there produced by the judicious grouping of these simple stitches, as well as by the happy choice of coloring. Persian embroidery is noticeable for the irregularity of the crossing; the stitches are taken up in groups or masses, in any direction most suitable to the design.



Persian Cross Stitch.

German workers are famed for beautiful cross stitch em-

broidery, though the colors they employ often mar the beauty of their specimens.

Vienna cross stitch is a variety recently introduced by Mme. Bach of the High School of Art Embroidery in Vienna. This consists of two stitches crossing each other, so worked as to be exactly alike on both sides of the material.

Russian peasant women send out from their snow-bound homes quantities of cross stitch embroidery, in red or blue, on linen—the result of work in the winter months. This is marked by decided originality, and oftentimes by rude vigor in design.

Chair backs of ivory sateen have been recently adorned with cross stitch patterns, in silk worked on canvas, the threads afterward drawn out. A sofa cushion of white cloth has cross stitch embroidery in silk, also worked over canvas.

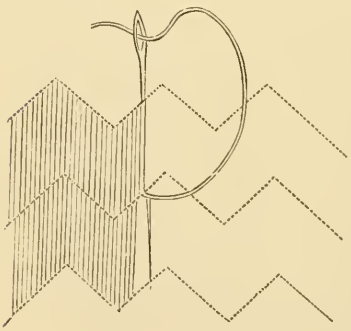
An ingenious and original reproduction of old tent stitch tapestries comes from the Pelham Industry, instituted by a clever and artistic lady of New York. Mrs. Hoyt's method is to select any material that has the warp and woof sufficiently regular to mark a stitch. A design is then chalked out, and village girls, trained by her, work it in flat tints of silk or crewel faded from their original brightness, the outline afterward traced in black, as in painting upon porcelain. Many beautiful wall-hangings and portières have been thus achieved. Modern tapestry, woven to imitate antique grounds, has been used for mediæval scenes with excellent effect. In some cases the wrong side of a tapestry is made to serve as ground, as in a spinning-wheel scene, exhibited at the last Loan Collection of the Society of Decorative Art. Another panel was worked upon French tapestry, having a woven design of green leaves and forest

branches. On it were sketched, with a free touch, the figures of a knight and lady so worked as to seem part of the texture of the fabric. A spray of leaves in the fabric, left here and there unworked, seemed to brush against the drapery of the figures, and thus completed the illusion.

A small square of old ecclesiastical embroidery, upon real cloth of silver, was bought in Florence recently by Mr. Jarves, for a gentleman of New York. This has detached tulips, roses and carnations, done with silk in finest tent stitch. Separately wrought in massive gold and silver, and applied, are, in the centre, the symbol IHS, beneath a cross, and, in each corner, the papal insignia of mitre and crossed keys, with the monogram T. R. C. This is thought to have been worked for one of the popes.

Cushion Stitches for Grounds.

These are taken, as in laid embroidery, leaving all the silk or wool on the surface of the work, with this difference: that cushion stitches are of even length, taking up only a thread of the canvas and describing a set pattern—as in the illustration.



Cushion Stitch.

Visitors to the Pavilion of the Royal School of Art Needlework at Philadelphia, in 1876, will recall a bedhanging, designed by the poet decorator Morris, for the Hon. Mrs. Percy Wyndham, the ground heavily worked in blue silk with

cushion stitches, throwing the pattern into relief. As a woven fabric would, at a little distance, have produced identically the same effect, practical sight-seers went away wondering at the enormous waste of labor in this costly drapery.

A splendid Italian wall-hanging of the seventeenth century will be remembered at the South Kensington Exhibition of Ancient Needlework, on which cushion stitch appears as a ground for large designs in cross stitch embroidery. Cushion stitch has many varieties, including Burden stitch, in which the stitches are of uniform length across the design, the second row started from half the depth of the preceding stitch and kept of the same length throughout.

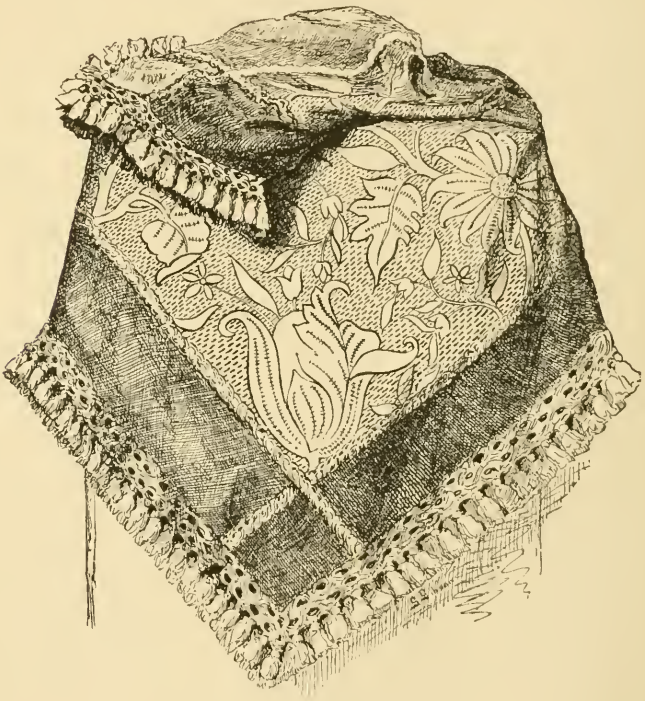
A beautiful and unusual variety of cushion stitches executed *on* the design appear in the embroidered deshilado elsewhere illustrated. This method is rarely seen except in canvas work. The conventional flower and foliage, springing from a vase in the centre, are done in soft pink and blue floss silks in zigzag patterns alternating with diamond shapes. The vase is formed by a basket-work of stitches embracing the tints of blue, pink, silver-gray and yellow. Shades of deeper red are introduced into the petals, and each form is outlined in close stem stitch. The heraldic animal supporting the vase on either side is drawn with admirable spirit and embroidered with scales, lozenges, basket-work, circles and zigzags in cushion stitches of extreme beauty and fineness. A most brilliant apparition he is, in his coat of many colors gleaming with the iridescent lustre of ancient floss!

Small geometrical flowers of amber, blue, rose and silver-gray make beautiful the spaces of linen left between drawn

work borders, upon this delightful and characteristic relic of old Spain.

Darning Stitches for Grounds,

Recently introduced in New York by the Society of Decorative Art, is an industry of Queen Anne's time, consisting of



Darned Work—Society of Decorative Art.

large flowers worked in outline, with a background darned in parallel lines with coarse silk of a contrasting color.

A specimen of this work is illustrated by Mr. Gibson's sketch from the original, executed by the Society of Deco-

rative Art. A square of ivory satin bordered with olive velvet has a rich floriated pattern outlined upon it in twisted chain stitch with dark blue filoselle. The entire ground is darned with old gold Dacca silk.

This work looks well in monochrome, ground and flowers alike; or with flowers in dull yellow and the darning in dull blue. Curtains have been made with a conventional pattern in blue, and a darned background in shaded yellows.

A bed-cover, made of unbleached muslin, has yellow vines and fruit cut out of serge and sewn down with crewel in button-hole stitch, the ground darned in dull yellow crewel. The same might be done in blue. Huckaback towelling has been adorned with *appliqué* patterns of blue serge, the ground darned in crewel of a lighter shade of blue for a tidy.

A couvre-pied of ivory Turk satin has a diaper design worked in olive silk, the ground darned in soft blue. It is lightly wadded with down, and is lined with blue undressed silk.

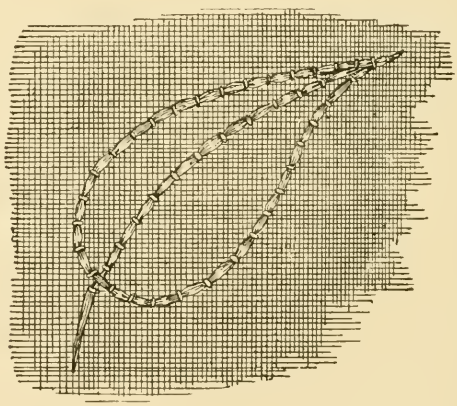
Darning stitch is used to restore old embroideries. A number of priests' vestments, brought by Mr. Chadwick from Seville, have the ground of cream-white satin covered with fine stitches of silk, enhancing, if possible, the rich effect of traceries wrought with gold thread, strips cut from gold foil, spangles and small hammered ornaments of silver, with colored floss embroidery.

An unusually artistic adaptation of darning stitches in crewel has been lately developed by Miss Townsend, of Albany. Variations in one key of color so poetically conceived and conveyed as to captivate at once the eye and imagination, are presented by the use of plush, satin, silks

and crewel. A study called the "Heart of June," has skilfully blended *appliqués* of plush, shading from darker to lighter rose-leaf pink. Upon this ground stray lovely flowers, wrought in the same hues. The *appliqués* are connected by a fine woven effect in crewels, like the "stocking texture" adopted by old Flemish, Italian and German embroiderers.

COUCHING, OR LAID EMBROIDERY.

Akin to darning stitch is laid work, including all forms of embroidery in which the threads of crewel, silk or gold are laid on the surface, and secured by threads coming from the back of the material, commonly known as couching.



Outline Couching.

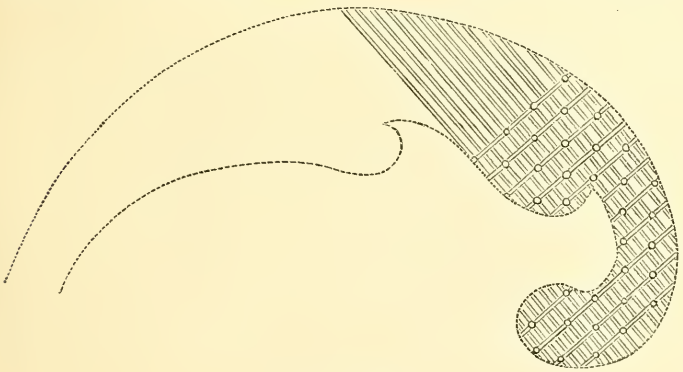
The simplest form of this stitch is outline couching, which will be found most valuable to the embroiderers for *appliqué* or for coarse outline work in large patterns. As may be seen in the illustration, this is simply a thick strand of double crewels laid down and stitched at regular

intervals by threads crossing the couching line at right angles. Filoselle, with crewel, is used to outline patterns in *appliqué*. Silk cord was much employed for couching in old embroideries. Gold cord was also used, and is now. Japanese gold thread, which is gilt paper twisted over cotton, cannot be otherwise worked than in couching.

Plain Couching.

This appears in old Spanish, Cretan and Italian specimens, and is of great service in producing flat effects where shading is unnecessary.

First lay your threads evenly from side to side of the pattern (in a line whether with warp or woof, to be de-



Plain Couching.

cided by the pattern), then pass the needle through to the back, and bring it up again at a distance, allowing an intermediate stitch to be taken backward ; thus the threads will lie alternately, first, third, second, fourth, etc. If the line slants much, it is not necessary to alternate the rows. When the layer is complete, threads of the same crewel,

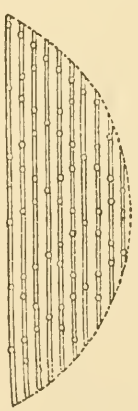
of silk or of gold, are laid across at regular intervals and caught down by stitches from behind.

The ground of antique embroideries may be restored by a filling of laid work, as described above. The old and worn material should be basted on a new backing, the frayed part cut away, and a close filling, in silk or wool, laid over all the vacant space, between the embroidered designs. This requires care in manipulation, but need not prove tedious.

Another form of couching is found in old Turkish embroideries, worked with silk similar to our floss. The fastening stitches are so taken, each across two of the couched threads, as to produce a diamond pattern on the surface. This is a variety of diaper couching.

Diaper Couching,

Includes all varieties of couching, in which the fastening stitches are so taken as to produce patterns on the "laid" surface of silk or crewel threads. Belgian work is noted for excellent effects in diaper.



Diaper Couching.

In network couching, the fastening stitches are placed diagonally instead of at right angles, forming a network, and are kept in place by a cross stitch at each intersection.

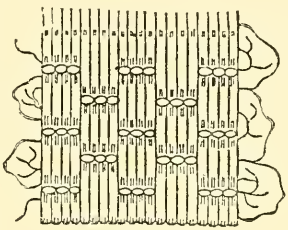
Brick-work is done by laying the threads down two together, and taking the fastening stitches irregularly to produce the effect of bricks in a wall.

Diapering is used for the drapery of small figures, such as Walter Crane subjects, and is then worked in fine silk and gold thread.

In ecclesiastical embroidery it plays an important part.

Basket Stitch.

The practice of this striking effect of old Spanish embroideries has endured until the present day. The stuffing, of soft cotton cord, is first laid on the material in even rows. Threads of gold are carried over the stuffing at right angles to the tie of the cotton cord, and are stitched down from the back between each double row of stuffing. Three rows of gold are "laid," in this manner, and the next three rows stitched down between the alternate lines of the cotton stuffing, so as to produce the effect of woven basket-work.



Basket Stitch.

The table-cover, of silk and gold embroidery upon pink satin, coming from Gallipoli, Turkey, and exhibited at the Metropolitan Museum, has gold basket stitch in the centres of the flowers.

An interesting specimen of couching on the design rather than on the ground, is found in a Portuguese bed-cover, of the last century, now in New York. Upon a square of coarse cotton stuff, of a beautiful cream color, are worked conventional flowers in red and salmon floss, laid on the surface and caught down from the back, having yellow centres, fastened with minute stitches of blue silk. Herring-bone stitch also appears in circles around the flowers. This quilt, finished with a box-plaiting of cotton stuff, was bought from the peasant family in Portugal who had it in daily use.

A Spanish altar frontal, having a design suggesting the

Louis XIV. period of decoration, is embroidered on cream satin, and edged with silver lace. Upon this specimen, also, are to be seen a variety of couching stitches *within* the boundaries of the design.

Hangings suspended from balconies on state occasions, in Spain, are called reposteros. Upon some of these superb draperies, dating from the sixteenth century, are to be found varieties of gold couching on crimson velvet. Basket stitch, like a wicker-work of massive gold, appears in its glory amid spangles and flowers cut from gold foil. This florid magnificence is a strong feature of all Spanish embroidery —the "Embroiderers of the King," as they are called, still producing many such examples.

A portière of antique Indian embroidery, has, on a ground of diapered light blue silk, a variety of couching stitches done in silk and gold, to fill portions of the design. The centre has a circle containing a tree with large conventional flowers in salmon red, on which perches a peacock with majestic plumes. Two antelopes are introduced into this part of the composition. In each of the four corners are peacocks and other birds, with flowers, worked in floss and outlined with gold. The border is the loveliest scroll-work it is possible to imagine, enriched with floss embroidery and gold couching. This, belonging to one of the choicest collections of New York, is unique in beauty and of great age.

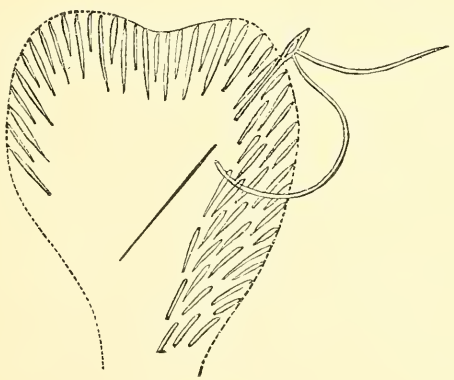
For the benefit of the curious, we disentangle from the quaint combination of law-French and mongrel Latin, in Roger Ascham's list of Queen Elizabeth's "Apparell," an account of the royal garters. These were worked on both sides alike, "cum laid work" stitched, corresponding to the methods of couching just described. They were further

adorned with gold and silver lace, and had tinkling silver pendants, tufted with cherry colored silk !

OPUS PLUMARIUM, OR FEATHER STITCH,

Takes its scholastic name from a fancied resemblance to the plumage of a bird. Like *opus pulvinarium*, it appears in the inventory, dated 1295, of vestments belonging to St. Paul's Cathedral, printed by Dugdale. This stitch, under its modern title, feather stitch, is chief in importance to the needlewoman of to-day, by whom it is often incorrectly termed "Kensington" or "crewel" stitch.

Feather stitch is used both for hand-work and for frame-work, the stitches, of varying length, so taken in and be-



Feather Stitch.

tween each other as perfectly to blend the colors of silk or crewel. In hand embroidery the needle is kept on the surface of the material.

Feather stitch is most suitable for embroidering flowers, whether natural or conventional. By observing the direc-

tion of the stitches in our illustration, the worker will be able to gain a clear idea of this necessary stitch.

Thread your needle with a strand of crewel about half the length of the skein ; without knotting it, work the edge of a petal in stitches forming a close even edge on the outline, and converging irregularly toward the centre. Then, with stitches longer on the surface than on the under side, work between the uneven lengths of the first set of stitches, and fill up all bare places by stitches starting from the centre and carried between those already worked. When finished, the stitches should be indistinguishable one from the other —the effect of the whole surface smooth, rich and even.

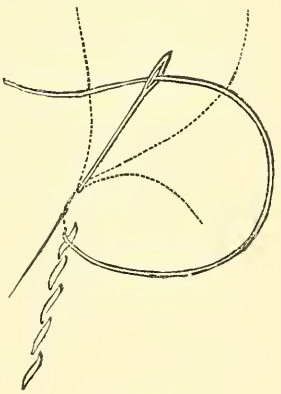
It would be difficult to find a more beautiful illustration of old opus plumarium than that on three strips of Renaissance convent embroidery, recently bought in France by their present owner, and almost the only—certainly the finest—examples of early feather stitch, in pure crewel work, we have been able to discover in New York. The ground of garnet velvet is modern, the work having been transferred to it by the aid of embroidery stitches so exquisitely set that only an expert can detect the process. The design is of graceful interlacing scrolls, in palest blue shaded with gray and deepening to black at the edges. The scrolls at crossing are intersected by flowers, suggesting the old Flemish flower-pieces—tulips, roses, iris, carnations and anemone, tinted in low tones of color, most of them shading from reddish pink to cream. Overlapping the border on either side are oak leaves shading from cream to brown. The petals and centres of the flowers are done in crewel of a fine compact quality unknown to our workers, the rest of the design in crewel of the usual thickness, but more closely twisted than that we use to-day. The colors are

those so soothing to the eye in the tapestries of Gobelins or Beauvais—tints that have preserved their original harmony, and asserted the excellence of vegetable dyes, by fading all together—most beautiful in age!

Stem Stitch.

After feather stitch, which is called the basis of all modern embroidery, comes stem stitch. As will be seen by the illustration, this is a long stitch forward on the surface of the material, and a shorter one back on the under side, working from left to right.

In beginning the stalk of a flower, insert your needle at the lower end of the line marked upon the pattern, and work upward until you reach the junction of a leaf or some other interrupting point; then take the needle under to the other line and work back, continuing in this way until the stem is solid. Always work the stalk of a plant lengthwise; it is a common error to carry the lines across.



Stem Stitch.

Reaching a leaf, you make use of the same stitch to work around the right side to the top, taking care that the needle is to the left of the thread as you draw it out. When the point of the leaf is gained, reverse the operation by working down the left side toward the stalk again, keeping the needle to the *right* of the thread, instead of to the left, as in going up. This supplies the necessary serration to the edge. Work-in the two

halves of the leaf, separately, with close stem stitch, with the needle to the left of the thread. In shading certain leaves, work one half darker than the other. Whenever shading is used, either for leaf or petal, work the outer edge first, allowing the inner row of stitches to blend with the others, as suggested in opus plumarium.

When working a leaf in outline, simply follow the direction for serrated leaves, as given above, afterward adding the veining, in ordinary stem stitch. Stem stitch may be varied according to the subject. If an even line is required, take care that the needle, when inserted, is in a straight line with the preceding stitch. With a curved line, the stitches may be sloped by inserting the needle at a slight angle.

With feather stitch and stem stitch at your command, you are already well advanced upon the road to art-embroidery.

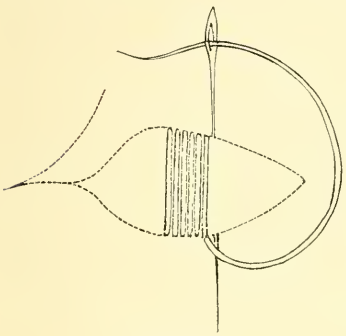
An interesting specimen of ancient needlework, owned by the Marchioness of Bute, is an altar-cloth, said to be Lutheran, worked entirely in fine hand stem stitch, in red silk, on a cotton or linen ground. It is an excellent example of this style of embroidery, and as beautiful as rare.

Split Stitch.

This is stem-stitch, varied by splitting the preceding stitch with the needle in order to give a firm and even line. It is employed with fine silk on outline-work of the most delicate quality.

Satin Stitch, or French Plumetis.

The superb Chinese embroideries which are the same on both sides, are done in this stitch. An antique hanging of peach-blossom silk, owned by a lady in New York, is covered with small landscapes and Chinese figures worked entirely in satin stitch, and colored conventionally without regard to imitation of the natural colors, according to the independent methods of these Asiatic artificers. Specimens of needlework from almost all other nations, in all periods, show the use of satin stitch; but in modern times it is less employed, except for small masses of embroidery in which rich effects are required. After stem stitch and feather stitch, the mechanical regularity of satin stitch seems uninteresting to the worker of to-day.



Satin Stitch.

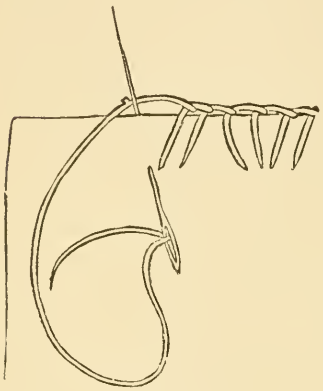
Plumetis is the variety of satin stitch known to us in French work on cotton or linen textiles. It is done by passing the thread evenly from one outline of the pattern to the other, as in the accompanying sketch.

Blanket, or Button-hole, Stitch.

This should require no introduction to our housewifely readers. Blanket stitch is used in combinations, such as three stitches in a group, then a space; or five stitches of irregular lengths, connected by a long loop with the five

stitches following, for finishing the edge of some embroideries.

Button-hole stitch appears to great advantage in a table-cover of cream linen, where old Spanish embroidery is edged by a border of *randa* or Spanish darned netting. A pattern of scrolls worked in close satin stitch with écru cotton has graceful radiating tendrils made by setting button-hole stitches back to back, like thorns upon a stem. Button-hole stitch is used in modern work for the edge of draperies, and for finishing the edge of large conventional patterns in *appliqué*. It is not recommended for the petals of small flowers in *appliqué*—producing a ridgy effect in the outline.



Blanket Stitch.

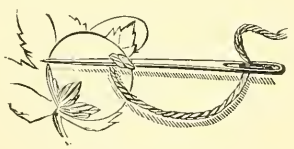
Montenegrin Work.

This combines several stitches mentioned. Although resembling that of Turkey, it is, like everything else done in the isolated little principality, vigorous and individual. Embroidery is profusely used upon the national costumes of Montenegro. A young prince of the reigning family appeared at a ball at the Tuileries, given for the sovereigns visiting Paris in 1867, in a costume so emblazoned with superb gold and silk embroidery as to charm the critical taste of the Empress Eugénie, who bestowed on it a burst of true feminine admiration.

A scarf, charmingly wrought with silk chrysanthemums on cotton, and other bits of Montenegrin work, are to be seen at the Metropolitan Museum. Embroideries from Salonica, exhibited in the same case, are very interesting.

French Knot.

This stitch has the merit of great antiquity, appearing in early ecclesiastical embroideries to represent the hair of "men and angels," as well as in elaborate landscape specimens of the time of James I., where it came into play for the foliage of trees and shrubs; also in some ancient Chinese embroidery, executed entirely in knots skilfully disposed. Describing certain examples of the latter, a recent writer observes that the design appears to have been printed in flat, low colors, on a cotton fabric, and that over the ground thus diversified are worked knots of silk, which have the effect at a short distance of a stippled drawing on a large scale. The flesh in the figures, and some other portions of the design, are worked entirely in close knots.



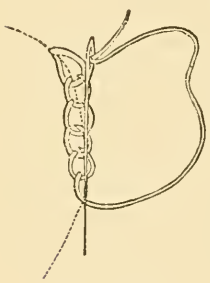
French Knot.

To-day we make use of it for the centres of certain flowers, where the knots lie like a row of small regular beads, and in other patterns requiring an effect of raised work. Bring your needle through the material at the exact point where the knot should be; hold your thread of silk or crewel in the left hand, and twist it once or twice around the needle; then pass the point of your needle through the material close to the spot where it came up, and draw the thread through with your right hand, while the thumb of

your left holds the knot in place until secure. When large knots are required, use more strands of wool or silk, and increase the number of twists around the needle.

Chain Stitch.

It is to be regretted that chain stitch should have fallen from its original high estate in the realm of needlework. This is due to the march of progress, which has captured it and surrendered it to machine-workers. Clothe it though they may in silk and gold, the poor, spiritless thing will never be interesting in their hands!



Chain Stitch.

Upon that celebrated piece of old English embroidery, the Syon cope—wrought, in the reign of Henry III., by nuns at Syon, near Isleworth, carried into Portugal at the Reformation, brought back to England at the beginning of this century, and now at South Kensington—a sort of chain stitch was used to work the flesh surfaces. "Chain stitch," writes the learned Canon Rock, "worked in circular lines, and relief given to parts by hollows sunk in the faces and other portions of the persons, constitute the elements of the opus Anglicum, or embroidery after the English manner."

Chain stitch was much employed during the seventeenth century in Germany, Spain, Portugal and England, for work almost always done in maize-colored silk upon linen. It is said that in Spain the patterns were copied from Eastern importations by the Portuguese. A quilt of this work, once belonging to an archbishop of Toledo, was lent by Lady

Cornelia Guest to the Special Exhibition of Embroideries at South Kensington, in 1873. At a museum in Madrid is preserved a handsome quilt worked with yellow silk on linen, with solid chain stitch embroidery representing men and animals.

A Portuguese bed-cover of the same style and period is owned by a gentleman of New York. This is a curious and beautiful example of chain stitch embroidery, in maize silk upon cotton, which well merits the prolonged inspection necessary to follow out its infinitely varied traceries. In the centre is a king seated in state, attended by pages and giving audience to sundry wry-necked petitioners. Above, are a queen's head and shoulders, the rising sun and a crescent moon on either side of her. Forming a wide border, and filling up every portion of the ground, are the following designs: warriors, men storming a castle, grotesques with heads of weasels riding upon tigers and blowing horns; hunting scenes, flying harts and antelopes, double-headed eagles, lions, imps with cloven feet shooting arrows at deer, dove-cots with doves, birds, rabbits, boats, flying-fish, mermaids, a gaping whale, men playing on musical instruments — none repeated exactly, in any part! The ground of this marvel of antique needlework is of coarse cotton, the lining of Spanish chintz in gaudy flowers, joined in rude patchwork patterns. The ground between the figures, and the flesh surfaces, are both done in small stitches like back stitch, taken in lines following the direction of the figure. The fringe is made of twisted yellow silk, and the general effect of color suggests Endymion's

> "Coverlids, gold-tinted like the peach,
> Or ripe October's faded marigolds."

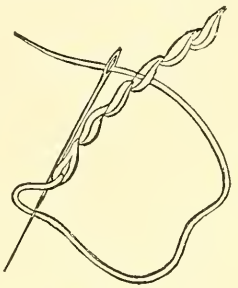
Modern Portuguese work, exactly imitating this, fails entirely in producing the luminous glow conferred by Time upon it.

Tambour-work, high in favor with the colonial belles of America, is a variety of chain stitch worked with a hook in a frame. Limerick lace is still made in Ireland upon the old tambour-frames, and we sometimes see splendid specimens of ancient Turkish tambour-work, as well as the rich gold embroideries we have learned to regard as belonging to that country. A bed-cover of lovely French tambour-worked rose-buds scattered upon linen, was brought here from Paris after the Reign of Terror, and is carefully preserved. The gay embroideries on cloth, which flaunt like banners on the walls of Eastern bazaars in Paris and New York, are done as described by Mr. Eugene Schuyler, in his interesting work on Turkestan. He says:

"Embroidery here (in Tashkent) is a trade chiefly practised by men. (Evidently an old practice, for a Chinese envoy sent to Tchinghiz Khan, in 1220, says: 'Sewing and embroidery are executed by men.') The cloth, on which the pattern is roughly marked out in chalk, is stretched over a hoop, and the workman, with a needle in shape somewhat like a crochet-needle, set in a wooden handle, pulls the silken thread through in a sort of chain stitch, with the greatest rapidity. The labor is so light, and the materials so inexpensive, that prices for embroidered articles are comparatively low. The natives use embroidery principally on their caps and their wide leather riding-trousers; but since the Russians have come, there has been such a demand for pillows, table-covers, etc., as to give a great impetus to the business and to raise the prices."

Chain stitch is used in modern embroideries, principally for outlines and arabesque designs.

Twisted chain stitch is also called Charles II. stitch, though it is difficult to associate ideas of industry with any of the debonair beauties who smile down from their frames at Hampton Court. It resembles an ordinary chain, except that, instead of starting the second stitch from the centre of the loop, the needle is taken back to half the distance behind it, and the loop is pressed to one side to allow the needle to enter in a straight line with the former stitch. This is pretty when done with Dacca silk in a bold outlined design upon satin, sateen or linen, as described in *Darning Stitch for Grounds.* English quilts of the seventeenth century show yellow silk embroidery on linen, combining both button-hole and chain stitch.



Twisted Chain Stitch.

The "Wardrobe Accounts" of Queen Elizabeth contain, in the last year of her reign the following entry:

"Six fine net caules, flourished with chaine stitch with sister's (*i.e.* nun's) thread."

Point Russe.

This stitch, as indicated by the name, had its origin in Russia, but has been widely used in forms of decorative embroidery with silk and cotton. Russian work on linen or cotton stuffs is usually done in red, though blue or black silk and cotton are equally suitable. *Point russe* is best known by small block patterns worked in fine back stitch. French embroiderers make abundant use of it. The Creole ladies of New Orleans adopted *point russe* for the decora-

tion of their morning gowns, as shown in elaborate robes of filmy texture, half covered with these stitches in fine white embroidery cotton.

Holbein Stitch.

This interesting form of decoration is borrowed from the draperies depicted in Holbein's paintings, among them the famous Madonna of the Dresden Gallery and a portrait of Jane Seymour, in Vienna. It may be done in black silk upon linen, or in red or blue embroidery cotton upon Java or Aïda canvas, for the borders of table cloths, tidies, napkins and towels, resembling *point russe* except in the method of working, which makes Holbein stitches appear the same on right and wrong side of the material.

Minute directions, with diagrams of Holbein work, are given in No. 3 of Tilton's Art Needlework Series, which should enable any intelligent needlewoman to acquire the varieties of this stitch

OPUS ANGLICUM.

Although not likely to meet with it again, we mention this stitch as one in its day more renowned than either of its comrades. It was introduced by English embroiderers, at the end of the thirteenth century, to improve upon the method of working flesh surfaces in straight rows, back and forth, until then employed by continental workers. Canon Rock asserts that it was a kind of chain stitch, adapted to the curve of the form under manipulation, and afterward pressed into low relief by the use of a thin iron rod ending in a heated knob. Lady Marian Alford and

other authorities say that, on examination with a microscope, opus Anglicum appears to be merely a fine split stitch, worked spirally, as we now work fruit.

While we have endeavored to enumerate, in regular order, the stitches most commonly applied to decorative embroidery, the advanced worker will find, from observation and experience, that a number of others may be combined or invented, to suit the demand of the moment, for embroidery owing anything of its charm to original design. In crewel work dating from the time of the Stuarts are to be seen a great variety of stitches : point-lace stitches, herring-bone, stars, arrow-heads—small, isolated, V-shaped stitches—or those in the shape of a scallop-shell radiating from the centre, forming a delicate mode of handling a subject for which solid feather stitch may not be required. In large, floriated designs upon twilled cotton, the needlewoman of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries allowed herself a degree of freedom we would do well to imitate when sufficiently expert. A certain amount of boldness, in experimenting with embroidery, is of infinite value in the ultimate effect, although the governing laws which regulate art needlework should be always held in memory.

The art of setting dainty stitches is one coming to most women by gift of nature ; but to excel is only permitted those who plod patiently along the arid paths leading up to the sun-crowned summits.

A word in behalf of extreme care and perfect neatness, in manipulation of work and materials, must be spoken : a piece of needlework trailing from a basket, or left on the seat of a chair, uncovered and forgotten, does not promise well for the aspiring art-embroiderer.

TEXTILES USED FOR EMBROIDERY.

"To work in the blue, and in the purple, and in the scarlet, and in the fine linen, with cunning work."—EXODUS.

AMONG materials for embroidery, procurable at the present time in New York, are the following:

Turcoman cloth, for curtains or portières, is a beautiful fabric like woven chenille. It may be had in olive, old gold, Indian red and maroon, fifty-four inches wide, at $5 to $6 a yard.

Raw silk momie cloth, for draperies, is an excellent material, fifty inches wide, at $3.50.

Cotton momie cloth is to be had in all the new shades for $1.10, fifty inches wide. Basket momie cloth, in woollen, costs $3. Momie cloth with threads of burnished gold is the newest of these stuffs.

Felting has a fine, cloth-like surface, and is two yards wide, at $1.50. This is used for table-covers, mantel valances, screen-panels, etc., and is to be had in many lovely shades.

English serge, a diagonal cloth, fifty-four inches wide, is so delightful a ground for needle-sketches in crewel that one wonders at its rarity in New York shops. It has long been popular with the workers of the Kensington schools, for curtains, screens, table-covers, chair-seats and many other purposes. One finds it occasionally on the shelves of an upholsterer here, but it has not yet been imported for general use—a fact to be regretted.

If *broadcloth* is used, the lustre of the surface should be first removed by sponging.

Diagonal dress serge, of a good stout quality, takes embroidery well.

Canton flannel, under the new name of "Fashion drapery," a soft, downy fabric, the same on both sides, comes in all the "art" shades at 90 cents a yard, double width. The dyes are excellent in this material, and it is much in demand.

Velveteen, in the better qualities, is a good ground for portières, chair-covers, curtain-borders and screen-panels. It is to be had, in single width, from $1 up.

Stamped velveteen is used for a variety of purposes; sometimes the pattern stamped on the material is followed in a thick twisted chain stitch of Dacca silk. The price of this material is from $1.25 up.

Now is the reign of piled fabrics, and *plushes* were never more admired. For bordering or banding other stuffs they are invaluable, as well as for use in *appliqué* work. The shades of these lovely textiles vary in different lights, as, for example, fawn changing to gold, salmon to silver, or brown to amber. Pomegranate, Bokhara red, Damascus blue, Pompeiian red, chestnut, olive, sage, résédas, are some of the colors to be had in plushes, at $4.50 a yard, in single width.

Heavy *woollen plush*, for draperies or chair-covers, to be worked with coarse crewels or with tapestry wool, costs $4.

Satin, of a rich quality, is the best ground for all the costlier embroideries where silk and gold thread are employed. Furniture satin, very wide, may be bought for from $7 to $10 a yard, to be used without backing. Ordinary dress satin requires a lining of cotton or linen, to enable it to

bear the strain of work. Satins should always be worked in a frame.

Turkish satin is to be had in olive, cream, maroon and old gold. It hangs in rich, soft folds, has a fine, close surface, and is altogether the most attractive of this class of stuffs yet imported. Turkish satin costs $6 a yard, and is fifty inches wide.

Sateen is much used for art needlework. It is a raw silk material with a silk face, at $3.50 a yard, fifty inches wide. Diagonal sateen is especially beautiful.

Satin brocatelle is a silk-faced material, woven in imitation of the ground of old embroideries. This is sixty-three inches wide, and costs from $10 to $25 a yard.

Large-patterned *brocatelles*, or silk damasks, now rather left behind in the race, are sometimes used upon the wrong side, where a lovely blending of colors has been obtained. For the middle space of a curtain, bordered with plush and headed with an embroidered frieze of *appliqué* plushes, a width of gold and blue damask, used in this way, has proved most successful.

The *India silks* manufactured for Mr. Louis Tiffany, by a well-known firm in Connecticut, from cocoons imported by themselves, are delightful for lighter draperies. These are chosen by artists in preference to French and Italian silks with all their sheen and stiffness. Some of Mr. Tiffany's designs have a close floriated pattern in a deeper shade of the ground tint. Others have plain grounds in such colors as écru, cream, salmon and Indian red. Curtains of India silk, embroidered in filoselle, are described elsewhere.

Linen momie cloth is a good ground for embroidery on screens. Among other washing fabrics used in art needlework are *crash*, *roller-towelling*, *bamboo-cloth*, *twilled cotton*,

duck, *sail-cloth*, *linen-sheeting*, *oatmeal-cloth*, *butcher's linen*, *scrym*, *cheese-cloth*, *strainer-cloth*, *muslin*, *India mull* and *Madras muslin*. The difficulty of procuring in the New York shops suitable linen for crewel embroidery is a standing grievance among workers. The beautiful tea-cloth linen, with its firm round thread, the warp and woof of equal thickness, so common in England, is ignored by our importers. It is only after repeated explanation and persistent effort that one is able to wring from the reluctant shopman a material in some degree resembling it. A yard-wide linen of excellent quality was recently purchased here, but a second visit to the shop was met by the response that no more was to be had at any price, as such things are rarely called for and are therefore imported in limited quantity. It is unfortunate that the Society of Decorative Art, and other centres for embroidery supplies, cannot yet be depended on to furnish this desirable material.

Bolton sheeting, or workhouse sheeting, is a beautiful cotton stuff, closely resembling that on which English needlework of the seventeenth century was chiefly executed. It has a rich, creamy tint, and hangs in soft folds, recommending it for draperies. Bolton sheeting has been imported and is sold by the Society of Decorative Art at $1 a yard in double width.

Apropos of the mania for unbleached fabrics, we are not to suppose this a novelty of the day. As long ago as 1574, the fair women of Venice, recognizing the becomingness of the tint, had their white lace dyed yellow; and certain saffron garments of Irish manufacture, richly embroidered, were fashionable in England until King Henry VIII. chose to fulminate against them in one of his arbitrary sumptuary laws, ordaining that the faithful should not "weare any shirt,

smock, kerchor, bendel, neckerchour, mocket or linen cappe colored or dyed with saffron," or use more than seven yards of linen in their shirts or smocks! Later, one "Mistris Turner, the first inventrisse of yellow starch," set afloat a fancy for saffron ruffs, which was so universally adopted as to give scandal to the clergy of the day—the Dean of Westminster going so far as to order that no lady or gentleman wearing yellow ruffs should be admitted to the Abbey. This was "ill taken," and "the King moved in it," so the order was withdrawn. The reign of yellow starch continued until beautiful Mistris Turner was convicted of murder, and hanged in 1615, at Tyburn, "in a cobweb lawn ruff of that color, with a black veil over her face—the hangman with collar and cuffs to match." The fashion then declined.

In France the "couleur Isabelle," adopted as his own by the great Condé, had origin in a patriotic vow made by the Archduchess Isabella in 1601, during the siege of Ostend by the Spanish troops, that until the taking of the town she would never change her linen! The siege lasting three years longer, the poor Princess was reduced to a melancholy plight; and her ladies, in token of their sympathy, had their linen dyed to match hers.

Camel color is the most recent variety of écru shades, coming to us from England.

TRANSFERRING THE DESIGN.

There are many people, unfortunately, who decline to make any attempt toward original design; others who, unable to draw, are yet anxious to try their proved skill in needlework. In such cases, it becomes necessary to trans-

fer a design, already sketched, to the material chosen. This process, almost always tedious and unsatisfactory, may be performed in different ways; the method in most common use is pouncing.

Prick a series of small holes in your outlined design, carefully keeping to the line. A large needle may be used for this purpose. Then secure the pattern upon the material, and pounce over the holes with blue powder or pulverized pipe-clay, rubbed in with a tightly rolled bit of list. Lift up the pattern, leaving the dotted impression upon the material. Go over the lines with a fine brush and blue water-color paint; or you may prefer a pen dipped in India ink.

Another method is to trace the design upon coarse tarlatan muslin laid over the pattern. Afterward, tack the muslin to the material and trace again with red or blue crayon, which leaves its color on the stuff through the tarlatan.

Transfer-paper may be used to lay between the pattern and the stuff designed for embroidery. Going over the pattern with some dull-pointed object will generally suffice to leave a tracery of red or black on the surface of the material.

The demand for good designs already stamped upon the material, is met by the Society of Decorative Art; and also by the Supply Department of the *Art Interchange*, 140 Nassau Street. Many of these designs are drawn by American artists of note, and are not to be found at the stamping-shops.

GOLD IN TEXTILES AND EMBROIDERY.

Cloth of gold is a name suggesting the gala days of many nations. Even before the time of Israelitish servitude to luxurious Egypt, workmen cut thin plates of gold into strips to twist with a woof of many colors. And at this day Chinese and Indian artificers work gold into their stuffs after the same ancient fashion, as do Italians with their *lama d'oro.*

Among nations of the far East, long before the Christian era, it was the wont of kings and princes to endue themselves with purple garments glittering with gold, and the early sovereigns of Rome assumed tunics of golden textiles when going forth in state. Many centuries after her burial in the catacombs, fair Cicely, the martyred saint, was found wrapped in a winding-sheet woven of pure gold. In England, gold fabrics were employed not only for church vestments but for secular uses; and cyclatoun, their Persian name, signifying bright, glittering, was adopted into the Anglo-Saxon tongue.

Cloth of gold took the name of "tissue" in later years; and the thin, smooth paper we still call tissue-paper was originally made to put between the folds of this costly material to prevent tarnishing when not in use.

Gilded silk and canvas, in imitation of cloth of gold, were afterward made, covered with leaf-gold, like the robe of Dame Gladnesse, in Chaucer's Romaunt of the Rose:

"—in an over-gilt samite, clad she was."

Modern cloth of gold, used for embroideries of the higher classes, costs from $25 to $40 a yard, according to the weight of gold it contains.

Gold judiciously introduced into woven fabrics or embroideries is of great value, both as a harmonizing agent between strong colors, and in adding artistic richness to the whole. The bas-relief ornamentation of the Spanish Moors is an excellent example of the splendid effect of gold when used to represent yellow in the union of the three primary undecomposable colors: blue, red and yellow. Ancient and modern Indian work, including the gold-embroidered velvets of Lucknow and red and blue leather wrought with gold and silver wire, excels in the use of gold over a ground of vivid color, mellowing its garishness with wonderful result. Persian stuffs profusely interwoven with gold are world-renowned, and this method of adornment is still retained among Eastern nations for daily uses. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, after her visit to the Sultana Hafiten, wrote as follows: "What grieved my eyes was the tablecloth and napkins, which were all tiffany embroidered with silk and gold in the finest manner, in natural flowers; you may be sure they were entirely spoiled before dinner was over. After dinner water was brought in gold basins, and towels of the same kind as the napkins, which I very unwillingly wiped my hands upon."

There could be no better lesson as to the value of gold thread and gold cord in embroidery, than observation of the many Chinese and Japanese specimens now to be seen in our shops. Whether in waved lines, zig-zags, fan-shaped groups of stitches representing trees, stems, solid masses, dots or what not, gold is rarely absent from their work—these thorough artists comprehending its importance, both in beautifying silken surfaces and as a means of isolating and conventionalizing their designs of sea, sky, thunder-bolts, dragons, insects, birds and flowers, capriciously assembled.

The glitter of gold in modern Cretan and Turkish embroideries upon cotton stuff is in many of our houses, where they are used as tidies to hang over chairs and sofa-backs; and we sometimes see, on the muslin textiles of India, gold in fantastic combination with the wings of emerald beetles. Some of the old fabrics of Mosul (taking their name of *muslin* from the place of manufacture), were of cloud-like lightness and delicacy, having narrow strips of gold woven in the warp. The Empress Josephine brought webs of gold and cotton into supreme fashion in France. While the peculiar sumptuary law of Napoleon was in force, limiting the decoration of the court dress of ladies to an embroidered border around the hem not to exceed four inches in depth, the princesses alone to wear a robe embroidered all over, India muslins, embroidered on the edge in gold and silver lama, were in great demand. No *corbeille* of the period was complete without the addition of one or two pieces of these glittering tissues.

The best gold thread now used for ecclesiastical embroidery is of English make, twenty-three carats fine, costing from twenty to thirty-five dollars the ounce.

Chinese gold thread is much cheaper, but is not to be depended on in handling. Japanese gold thread does not tarnish, and is more desirable. Bullion, passing, plate and spangles are employed in silk embroidery. Gold thread should be couched, in most cases, and looks better when worked in a frame.

CREWELS, SILKS, ETC.

"Inkles, *caddisses*, cambrics, lawns; why, he sings them over as they were gods and goddesses."—WINTER'S TALE.

CREWELS, called caddisses in the olden time, are two-plied worsteds with a loose twist; they are dyed in fast colors, in all the beautiful tints required for art embroidery. The cost here is ten cents a skein, and in ordering crewels of the Society of Decorative Art, or elsewhere, it is well to request that the shades be assorted by a practised hand—a great help to the beginner.

"Embroidery" or "bobbin" silk, the successor of floss, is employed for work on satin or silk, when preferred to filoselle.

Filoselle, twin sister of crewel in most of the modern needlework, is a pure silk, though without the gloss and finish of old-fashioned embroidery silk. It is bought in skeins, the strands divided for use according to the thickness of the thread required. Filoselle should be cut in short lengths, and never doubled in working. It is inexpensive, selling at seven cents a skein.

Tapestry wool, twice the thickness of crewel, is little imported to America. It is useful for coarse outline work on borders, lap-robes and wherever a large pattern is employed for the purpose of covering ground.

Arrasene is worsted chenille without the supporting wire or silk. It masses well, and has, when worked, a rich, mossy surface.

Dacca is a silk used for darning backgrounds and for other purposes in embroidery.

Purse silk is sometimes used.

FRAMES.

While the best embroidery on best material is commonly worked in a frame, many small objects can be conveniently done in the hand. Tidies, borders, doyleys, bands and cushions, are as well unstretched; but where a complicated design is to be developed on a large scale, and in working on satin, plush or velvet, the worker should spare neither time nor pains in so elaborating her preparations for the task as to secure an absolutely smooth surface.

A hand-frame of pine or walnut, mortised at the corners, will, in most cases, be all that is required. The small, round frames made of two hoops, fitting one within the other, are most useful in detached patterns, or in working a larger object, piece by piece.

For an important piece of work, it is customary to use a long frame, resting on wooden trestles. In selecting a frame, see that the webbing, fastened to the sides, is long enough to secure your work in one direction. The material is sewn firmly to this webbing, and if the piece is too long to be sewn in the frame at once, roll it up, cover it, and fasten it to one bar. Then put in the stretchers, and secure them with the pegs. When required, the webbing may be braced with a coarse needle threaded with twine, and drawn up until the material is tightly strained within the frame. From this point forward, the gain of ease and comfort to the worker is very great.

FRINGES FOR NEEDLEWORK.

The sumptuous fringes of pure silk accompanying old needlework and upholstery are rarely seen now ; most of their successors are unworthy of the name.

They have been diverted from the first uses of fringe in the world of decoration, which were, according to Pugin, nothing more than to knot together the ragged ends of silk or woollen stuff to prevent it from further ravelling. Gradually these knots were placed at regular intervals, and became a system of ornament. Therefore it is that cord and bullion fringes are inappropriate when applied to drapery, while in other places they may, though uninteresting, be employed without impropriety.

Ravelled linen, or momie cloth, knotted at intervals, can be used. Turcoman, when ravelled, produces a superb fringe, like soft chenille. A simple and effective fringe is made of felting cut in fine strips ; in this, two or more colors can be combined.

A fringe is made of crewels wrapped around a piece of inch-wide card-board, caught at one side, cut at the other, then combed into fluffiness by a coarse dressing-comb. These tassels are fastened to the hem or border of the material by threads of twisted silk.

Woven fringes in plain threads of crewel, chenille or sewing-silk, are always good. Floss-silk balls or apples, for finishing baskets, etc., can be bought at seventy-five cents a dozen. Fish-net fringe is pretty for coarse *écru* hangings. This can be made of *écru* cord or twine, in ordinary fish-net stitch, in large meshes, with tufts of combed-out crewel tied at the joining of the meshes. In all decorative needlework, fringe should be regarded as a finish, not as an ornament.

APPLIQUÉ.

"Silks of the Orient, wrought with patient care,
Patined with gold, inlaid on velvet rare."

—GINEVRA'S BRIDAL.

APPLIQUÉ or applied work, ignorantly spoken of as one of the unimportant methods of decorative embroidery, is classed by Dr. Rock under the head of old English "opus consutum" or cut-work. "Of cut-work in embroidery," he says, "those pieces of splendid Rhenish needlework, with the blazonment of Cleves sewed on a ground of crimson silk, at South Kensington, and the chasuble of crimson double-pile velvet, No. 78, are good examples. In the last, the niches in which the saints stand are loom-wrought, but those personages themselves are exquisitely worked on separate pieces of fine canvas, and afterwards let into the unwoven spaces left open for them. A Florentine piece of cut-work is alike remarkable for its great beauty and the skill shown in bringing together both weaving and embroidery. Much of the architectural accessories is loom-wrought, while the extremities of the evangelists are all done by the needle; but the head, neck and long beard are worked by themselves upon very fine linen, and afterwards put together in such a way that the full white beard overlaps the tunics. . . . . For the sake of expedition, all the figures were sometimes at once shaped out of woven silk, satin, velvet, linen or woollen cloth, as wanted, and sewed

DOORWAY AND DRAPERY,

BY LOUIS C TIFFANY

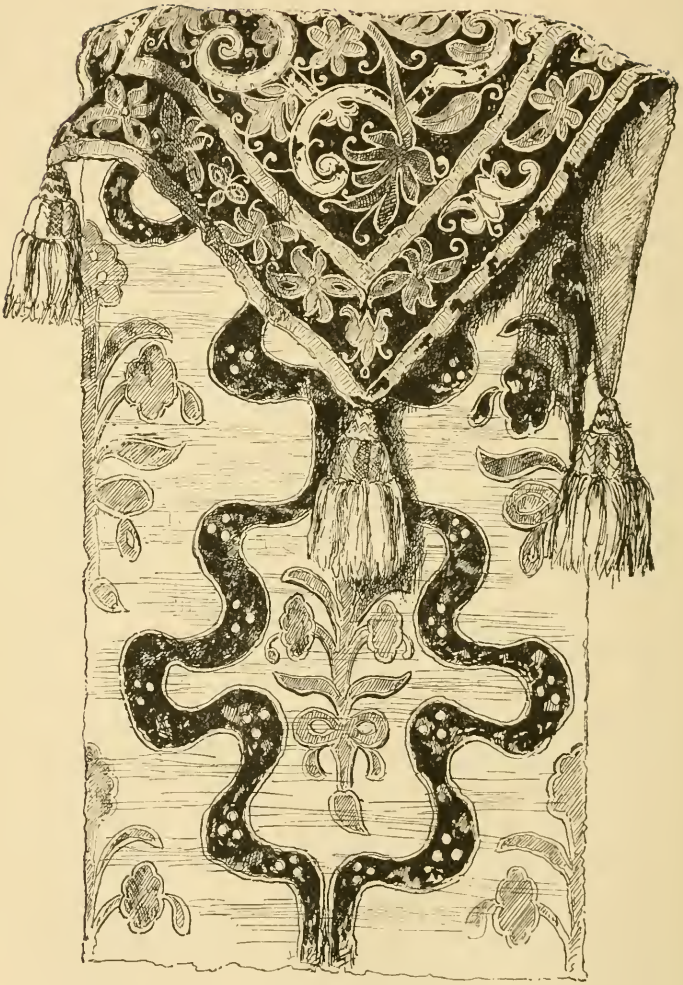
THE MATCH PTG CO NEW YORK

upon the grounding of the article; the features of the face and the contours of the body were then wrought by the needle in very narrow lines done in brown silk-thread. At times, even this much of embroidery was set aside for the painting-brush, and instances are to be found in which the spaces left uncovered by the loom for the heads and extremities of the human figures, are filled in with the brush. Sometimes again, the cut-work done in these ways is framed, as it were, with an edging either in plain or gilt leather, hempen or silken cord, like the leadings of a stained-glass window."*

Gold and silver star-like flowers are found sewn on *appliqué* embroideries of Venice and Southern Germany. Jewels, gold-passing, enamels and filagree, spangles, coral, seed-pearls, beads and bugles, were also used. A French court-robe of the olden time has been shown us, made of pale green gauze over satin, the train curiously ornamented with *appliqué* flowers and leaves of silk, on which the shading is produced by the stain of acids. Rich embroidery of leaves and grasses, extending upward, is studded with butterflies and dragon-flies of blue and silver foil, iridescent beads and colored *appliqués*.

Our illustration is drawn from specimens of Venetian cinque cento embroidery in the same collection. The scroll-patterns in the strip are cut from crimson velvet ornamented with spangles, and sewn with silk cording upon

* What an auctioneer would irreverently term a "lot" of *appliqué* saints were found recently in the hands of an English dealer in curiosities, and have arrived in New York rather the worse for wear and tear. These venerable worthies have the faces and hands painted on linen, with glories of gold foil set upon embroidered locks of hair. Their robes are of woollen stuff disposed in actual plaits, with surplices of fine lace resembling point d'esprit, bedizened with spangles and with gems of colored glass.



Cinque Cento Appliqué, from the Collection of Watson & Co., Union Square

a ground of cloth of gold. The other portions of the design are of a beautiful pinkish-red color, in silk.

The cushion-cover draped above it has a ground of royal purple velvet, with bands of lemon-yellow silk. The central design is of rich ivory-yellow silk, and the other patterns vary from deep to lighter greens. The tassels are of variegated silk and gold.

Another drapery of this period has scrolls and vases cut from blue and lemon-yellow silk, and applied to what was once garnet velvet, now faded to salmon-red.

Italian workers of the seventeenth century were fond of using transposed *appliqué*. This consisted of tracing the same design of foliage conventionally treated, or of arabesques and scrolls, upon two fabrics, say on a band of crimson velvet and on another of yellow silk. Then, cutting out the pattern from both, the silk was inlaid upon the velvet ground, and the velvet on the silk, the edges concealed by a fine cord of silk or gold.

On a piece of old Milanese damask, figured with violet on violet, appear designs in *appliqué* cut from two shades of yellow satin ; these are remarkable for their powerful relief, suggesting sculpture rather than embroidery, and have been pronounced to be worthy of the best masters of their time, that period so rich in suggestions of ornament—the seventeenth century. The specimen described is in the collection of M. Leclercq, in Paris. Ecclesiastical embroiderers made abundant use of *appliqué*, in supplying flat masses of color to altar-cloths and vestments. In Spain, horse-trappings and reposteros are loaded with *appliqué* flowers cut from gold and silver cloth.

A common method of preparing designs for modern *appliqué* work is to draw them upon linen stretched tight within

a frame, then paste cloth or velvet smoothly upon the reverse side. When dry, cut out your patterns by the lines marked on the linen, and apply them in the usual way.

On the necessity for lining or backing *appliqué* patterns, there is among practical workers some difference of opinion.

Embroidered Disks for Inlaid Appliqué, designed by Mrs. Wheeler.

Many dispense with it altogether. The method used in the work-rooms exhibiting the best specimens of this work in New York is as follows:

First, trace your design upon the material to be used as a ground, and secure it in a frame. Then lay red transfer-paper face downward, upon the wrong side of plush or velvet, and the right side of cloth or serge. Place your design upon this, going over the lines firmly with a blunt instrument, and upon lifting the paper you will find the pattern sufficiently indicated to guide you in cutting out the shapes. If there is danger of the lines rubbing out, go over them with a black lead-pencil or a pen and ink. Cut out the shapes, and lightly paste them in place upon the ground.

Sew them around the edges with fine silk, the stitches afterward concealed by a cord or a line of couched silks or crewels. The stems are worked in by stem-stitch, by cords laid on the surface and caught down, or by strands of crewel fastened in the same way. Leaves are finished by vein-

Embroidered Disks for Inlaid Appliqué, designed by Mrs. Wheeler.

ings of silk or crewel work. In gold or silver embroidery on velvet or satin the design is first worked on strong linen, then cut out and applied as in ordinary *appliqué*. An exact reproduction of the cord and cockle-shell pattern belonging to the period of the Iron Cross in France is made with cloth of gold *appliqué* and silver cord purposely tarnished, upon bands of dark blue velvet. This with other artistic revivals in needlework of all periods in France comes from an atelier in Paris, where the entire hangings for a mediæval room are furnished at command, in stuffs so skilfully dyed, embroidered, defaced, faded and fringed, as to be indistinguishable from the coveted originals.

For *appliqués* of delicate plushes, great care is required in the handling. In cutting them out, observe that the color changes if the pile is reversed.

In embroidering pieces of plush to be applied, a good plan is to have the pattern transferred to coarse tarlatan, then basted on the plush. Secure this in a small embroidery-hoop. Work over the tarlatan, which is afterward cut away, outlining the design with gold thread if desired. When finished, this may be cut out and applied as usual.

The best method of finishing *appliqué* is with silk or gold cord, sewed down, or with strands of crewel mixed with filoselle, caught from behind with small stitches. Button-hole stitches should be used only with borders and conventional patterns, as a rule. Point Russe, herring-bone, satin stitch, chain stitch and stem stitch are employed with the varying demands of design and material selected.

In transferring old embroidery from a worn-out ground, cut it out carefully and tack it in place upon new silk or satin; then, with stitches following the direction of those in the pattern, work the edges with silks or wools faded to match.

A table drapery of modern French work is of peach-blossom satin with a scroll-border of fine white linen cut-work, outlined with a delicate passementerie-like lace. Portions of the design are filled in with varieties of lace stitches in white silk. From Paris come, also, wall-panels of olive silk, with classic figures—both flesh surfaces and drapery made by *appliqués* of embroidered satins.

Curtains designed by the Princess Louise for the Town Hall at Manchester, England, have been commended as a good example of harmonious combination of the three primary colors in *appliqué*. Upon the velvet dado, bordering a

curtain of deep red cloth, are applied a row of erect sunflowers. Around both curtain and dado runs a border of deep blue cloth, studded with disks of yellow.

A curtain of Turkish blue cloth has stiff upright stalks of lilies, the flowers worked in yellowish white silk with yellow stamens—the leaves *appliqué* in greenish brown cloth. A border and dado are of black velveteen finished at the seam with strands of green-brown crewel, caught with yellow silk. This curtain is lined with old gold canton flannel.

Appliqué Oranges, on Blue English Serge.

A pretty, unpretending set of draperies for the morning room were begun by the Royal School of Art Needlework, to be finished and hung in New York. The curtains, made of peacock blue, are bordered with longitudinal bands of turquoise blue serge. Upon this border are conventional oranges and leaves, cut from mandarin yellow and green serge, with a couched outline of thick crewel. A mantel-lambrequin to match has the board covered with the darker shade of blue, which also forms a piping to finish the turquoise band, repeating the design. The leaves, etc., are veined with lighter shades of green crewel.

Lady Ashburton's Curtains.

Among the famous art embroideries worked by the South Kensington schools are those designed for Lady Ashburton, where an *appliqué* of plushes serves to revive a rich effect in early Venetian embroidery. These draperies are made of a tawny plush velvet, changing from gold to amber in varying lights, with a powdered (*i.e.*, detached and scattered) design

of poppies and passion-flowers wrought in gold thread. The border, two feet in width, is of dead gold tapestry, with an *appliqué* of velvets and plushes in all the shades gained by changes of light upon the body of the curtain. This beautiful design, taken from an old Venetian model, is outlined with gold and edged on either side by a scroll reproducing the poppies and passion-flowers in a narrow conventionalized border of gold thread.

Fawn Plush Curtains, for a New York Drawing-Room.

Some of the same tones of color appear in curtains recently made for the drawing-room of a gentleman long known in New York as a patron of what is best in household art, as well as in a wider sphere. The draperies, in golden fawn plush, have a frieze of cloth of gold, crossed by trellis-work of plushes so disposed that light, striking upon the curtains, gives them the effect of being suspended by an illuminated net-work from their rods.

From Mr. Tiffany comes, also, a fine combination of *appliqué* plushes intended for the dining-room of a new and stately dwelling. A frieze of golden brown velvet, to be inserted above high mahogany panelling, has outlined upon it flowers of various fruit-trees, with golden butterflies. For the wall-space on either side of a mahogany mantelpiece are two panels of golden-brown velvet representing Japanese-looking apricot-trees and quince-trees in blossom, each springing erect from a golden vase. The vases, worked on real cloth of gold with silks in the copper shades, giving them a burnished lustre, are underlet into the velvet. The curtains to accompany these embroideries are of blue velvet, with a deep border representing fruits with their

foliage, corresponding to the suggestion of flowers on the frieze above. These fruits are made entirely by *appliqués* of different plushes, mingled with silk embroidery.

A wall-panel, designed by Mrs. Wheeler, shows a similar treatment of *appliqué*. Upon a length of copper-colored velvet the bough of a fruit-laden orange-tree is made, through skilful management of the pile and texture of red-gold and orange plushes, to give actual impressions of light and shadow. The pearly gleam of blossoms lurking behind leaves is conveyed through embroidery in silk.

Sprays of native American azalea, worked in shades of pink and purple, are powdered over the surface of a sheen-ful silk, like the baudekin sent from Bagdad to the West in olden days. Underlet *appliqués* of pink, purple, and amber, closely embroidered, lend to this beautiful curtain, intended for a boudoir, the iridescence of the lining of a shell.

A *portière*, suitable for a bridal gift, has a trellis-work of olive velvet on a ground of black uncut velvet shading to amber. Sprays of orange-blossoms, embroidered in silk, intersect the crossings of the trellis. In the centre of the curtain is a square of olive velvet, having in *appliqués* of embroidered satins a charming mediæval figure of the bride in Spenser's "Epithalamium." For motto are these lines:

> "Her modest eyes, abashèd to behold
> So many gazers as on her do stare,
> Upon the lowly ground affixèd are."

A library *portière*, made to imitate one dating from the seventeenth century, is of diagonal blue serge decorated with diagonal stripes of unbleached woollen braid or tape, sewed on either side of the family motto of the owner,

formed in antique letters of the same tape, about six inches long. The motto is repeated again and again, until the space is filled, leaving off in the middle of a word, if necessary. The crest, a lion rampant, is cut from unbleached serge, and applied upon the curtain at intervals between the mottoes. Any other heraldic device would do as well, and, to give the right effect, one must select the exact yellow tone of unbleached stuff and braid that will harmonize with the dull blue of the background. A little embroidery in blue crewel is necessary to mark and point the device chosen. The edges are finished with a cord of couched crewel.

OUTLINE WORK.

—— "and with her needle composes
Nature's own shape, of bud, bird, branch or berry."
—SHAKESPEARE.

AS the chief beauty of outline work depends upon grace and fidelity to form, it is naturally a craft demanding poetic instinct as well as delicate manipulation. In nothing else wrought with a needle does the worker achieve results so delightfully prompt. Outline work is independent of color; knows not the aid of light and shadow; gives only suggestions of beauty in pure and simple curves. Correct drawing is therefore a requisite in making the design, especially if it be a classic figure, urn or vase, intended for screen or panel. There is but one step to the ridiculous in describing the subtle lines of the human form for embroidery purposes, and how often is it taken!

In searching for figure subjects to adapt for outline embroidery, the illustrations of our leading periodicals, for which the best talent of the day is employed, offer many beautiful drawings suitable to the purpose. Flaxman's outline designs of the human figure, in illustration of Roman and Greek mythology, are to be had from dealers in artists' supplies, so arranged as to afford a valuable addition to the art-worker's portfolio; as also a set of plates printed in colors, representing a number of exquisite Greek vases in the Royal Collection at Munich.

Panel for Outline Embroidery, designed by Miss Dora Wheeler.

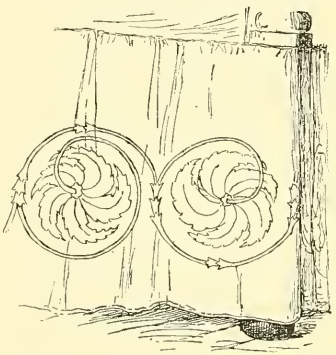
Among outline designs recently displayed, those of Miss Dora Wheeler have been received with especial favor. The sketch here given may be enlarged to work in monochrome upon linen, serge, or satin. With ivory satin, a border of brown velvet may be added with good effect. A set of wall-panels, by her, for a young lady's bedroom, four in number, to be hung by rings sliding upon small brass rods, thus allowing them to be taken down at will, are full of poetic suggestiveness. The stuff on which these draperies are worked is India silk, in the natural color, outlined in pale-hued filoselles. Upon one panel a flight of joyous birds swoop downward toward a bough of apple-blossoms like rosy snow,

and antique letters, hap-hazard, convey the kindly greeting:

"Sing, heart! thou art young, and the world is in blossom."

Cherry-blossoms, variously grouped, adorn the next panel; another has apricot-flowers, and the fourth a branch of dogwood. A veritable spring song is this, illustrating at once the "gioventu dell' anno" and the "primavera della vita" sung by the Italian poet.

Outline work has been used for silk embroidery upon linen since the days of the Pharaohs, a date sufficiently remote to entitle it to our respect; it was specially so employed during the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which furnish us the best existing specimens of decorative needle work. The red silk embroideries on Italian and Spanish linen work are spirited examples; and on the Countess of Shrewsbury's bed-hangings at Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire—the famous museum for old English embroideries—appears a beautiful circular flower, forming a border, worked in outline in lilac silk upon twilled white cotton stuff.



Design for Outline Embroidery, from Bed-drapery at Hardwick Hall.

Outline designs have been made attractive in crewels worked on Bolton sheeting, in two shades of China blue, in a bold branching pattern, covering all the upper space of a curtain, the lower part banded with blue linen, and a blue border framing it.

Something of this idea was carried out in unbleached muslin and dark blue washing stuff: a Japanese family group, outlined with blue ingrain cottons, was framed by a narrow band of blue, and had a blue dado duly proportioned in depth and adorned with cotton fringes. The design—a Japanese mamma with baby pick-a-back, and one or two infant orientals in various postures around her feet—was cleverly drawn by a skilled pencil. But the advertising cards we get in such numbers, now-a-days, or any one of a dozen fans or screens, would supply a similar fancy.

Doyleys, to use beneath the finger-bowl, are most commonly decorated in outline work, for which fine filoselle, the color previously set by dipping each skein in a bowl of boiling water, is employed. In those wrought by Miss Ramsay, the stitches used are as fine as a fairy's; the texture of the linen to match. Tiny squares are ravelled out in fringes, and sometimes further adorned with lines of hemstitching. Upon each square is embroidered a separate design. How pretty they are, the little cobweb morsels! Favorite subjects in this class of work are little figures in antique dress, after Kate Greenaway, Walter Crane or Henschell's *genre* sketches, done in two shades of China blue filoselle, the lighter blue employed for head and hands. Or else, suppose upon a doyley, a Japanese vase outlined in crimson silk, an arabesque decoration on its neck and base in old gold. Behind it a fan half open, the stitches and decoration in brown and old gold. Brushing against the grouping of vase and fan, a spray of leaves in brown and green. The combinations may be varied infinitely. Where it is desired to work in crewels on washing material, a heavier linen should be used and a larger style of decora-

tion employed, and the materials should be adapted to furniture, tidies or draperies.

For outline work, the stitch employed is the simple stem stitch worked in a frame, taking care to split with the needle the preceding stitch, to give exactness to the outline and soften the effect. It is then called split stitch.

Split stitch embroideries, exhibited at the rooms of the Society of Decorative Art by Miss Eva J. Walker, are no less remarkable for delicacy of manipulation than for refinement in design. Landscape panels in outline work on satin, sent by Misses Rosa and Lucy Towne, of Philadelphia, have received the seal of the Society for admirable design and workmanship.

Wall-hangings with bold outline work in crewels on unbleached cotton stuff were designed by Mr. Ames Van Wart —and worked for his own home. These, with *portières* to match, made, when hung, an interior not only charming, but unique.

A graceful design for a music-room panel, drawn by Mr. E. Burne Jones, represents "Music, heavenly maid," enthroned amid her followers. This has been worked in outline on neutral tinted hand-woven linen in brown crewels.

A bed-cover may be devised by using a linen sheet of the best quality, dividing it into spaces, squares and oblongs, leaving the largest space in the middle; then embroider, in outline, sprays of flowers adapted to the rectangular shapes and slightly conventionalized. The dividing lines should be worked in close herring-bone stitch.

Unbleached muslin has been employed for a coverlet, worked in blue and red ingrain cottons, between bands of Turkey red. For this, choose the coarsest cottons that can be procured, and fill in and point the outline design with

various stitches, such as wide button-hole, net-work and cross stitch.

Poppies, outlined with red and black cotton, and embellished by appropriate mottoes worked in antique text, are suitable for pillow-covers.

One great merit of outline work in silk or crewel upon washing fabrics is that repeated washing only serves to harmonize and blend the tints used. Directions, elsewhere given, will show how this cleansing process may be safely practised.

Door-Curtains of Garnet Velvet, in Outline Work.

A *portière* from South Kensington, hung in the old-fashioned panelled drawing-room of a country house near New York, is of deep garnet velvet. Over the entire space of the ground of two curtains, forming the *portière*, runs a bold trellis-work of brown crewels in heavy strands, couched with old gold filoselle. Upon this trellis are outlined pomegranates, with their foliage. Taken in connection with its surroundings, this *portière* is an excellent example of decorative effect to be gained from outlined work, on a large scale.

Morning-Room Curtains, in India Silk.

On curtains of pale salmon-colored India silk, with a woven floriated pattern a shade darker than the stuff, and bound around the edge with the same silk in plain ground a few shades deeper in tone, outline work has been used with peculiarly original effect. At intervals, upon the body of the curtains, the embroiderer's needle has sketched geo-

metrical shapes and crescents, coral branches and odd figures, born apparently of the whim of the moment, in silver-gray, dull red or buff split filoselle. The quaint charm of this decoration is furthermore enhanced by an occasional *appliqué* of silk in one of these artistic shades of color, bearing an outline tracery like those scattered about the body-space. The finish consists of tufts of crewel fastened to a horizontal band of stitching, with irregular depending lines of embroidery, simulating a fringe, about a fifth of the distance to the top of the curtain from the floor.

A bold design for outline work is that on one of the Union League Club-House *portières*, where a net with entangled fishes is swung across the main space of the velvet drapery.

One of the most effective methods of work practised in Mr. Tiffany's atelier is stuffed embroidery. A beautiful Celtic tracery, adapted to the decoration of library curtains made of rich chestnut-brown velvet, is thrown into low relief by means of a stuffing of cotton laid on the wrong side, and the design outlined on either edge by a stitching of old gold silk. A wall-frieze to correspond is inserted above mahogany panelling.

TREATMENT OF EMBROIDERIES, WHEN FINISHED.

Oftentimes, the work-woman who sits down to face the results of long-continued labor in a completed screen or panel, says to herself: "What shall I do with these little irregularities in the surface, caused by an occasional tight stitch? How bring my work to that perfect smoothness of surface so indispensable to an article designed to take the place of a picture, when framed or hung?"

Do not use an iron upon the wrong side, if you can avoid it. Spread a clean blanket upon an ironing-table or upon the floor of an unused room ; place your piece of work with the right side down upon the blanket, and secure it evenly in place by driving tacks all around the edge, about an inch apart. If your material be silk, velvet, satin, sateen or plush, it is best to use a little book-binder's paste (home-made flour paste, boiled, with a little alum, will do), put very carefully, with a brush, upon the back of the embroidery. Do not permit the paste to touch the material elsewhere. Leave the work as it is for a day and night at least ; then carefully remove the tacks, and roll the embroidery, covered with soft linen or tissue-paper, over a stick to keep it in place. In obstinate cases try a large iron, pressed heavily on the wrong side, through a damp cloth. Your work will then be quite smooth, and may be consigned to the upholsterer for mounting.

Banner-Screen, made up at Home.

In making up a banner-screen, to be tied by loops or ribbons to the brass fixtures bought for the purpose, paste and stretch the work as described until quite smooth. Cut a piece of canton flannel the size of the banner, and lay the work upon it. If the banner is to be bordered with velvet at the bottom alone, sew the strip neatly across its lower edge. If the velvet or plush is to be on the four sides of the banner, see that the edges are cut to meet on the bias, at the corners. Press the seams open, to lie smooth, then lay the work upon the interlining of canton flannel, and turn the edges down, basting them on the canton flannel. Next

add the lining of silk or silesia, with trimming of fringe or without, as desired.

Washing Crewel Embroidery on Linen or Crash.

When washed for the first time, pour a gallon of boiling water over a pound of bran, and leave it, occasionally stirred, to soak for a day. Strain the bran-water, and use it lukewarm to wash your crewel-work. Squeeze and pass gently through the hands, but do not wring it. Then hang it to dry in the house, in a warm temperature, and iron on wrong side before it becomes entirely dry. In ironing, lay the work right side down upon flannel. As a general thing, crewel colors wash beautifully, if the wools employed are of the best quality. Soap should not be used, or soda. Exposure to sunlight, while damp, is also a mistake.

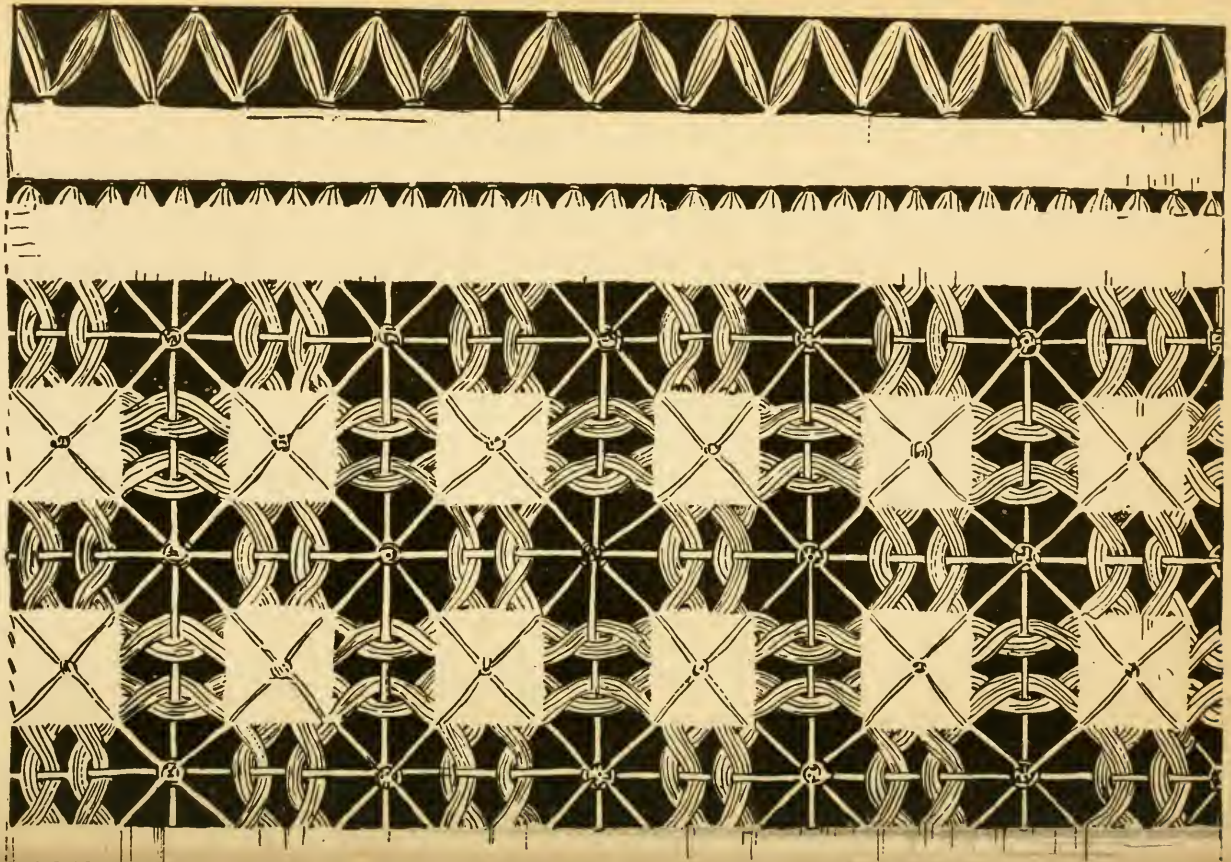
DRAWN WORK, OLD AND NEW.

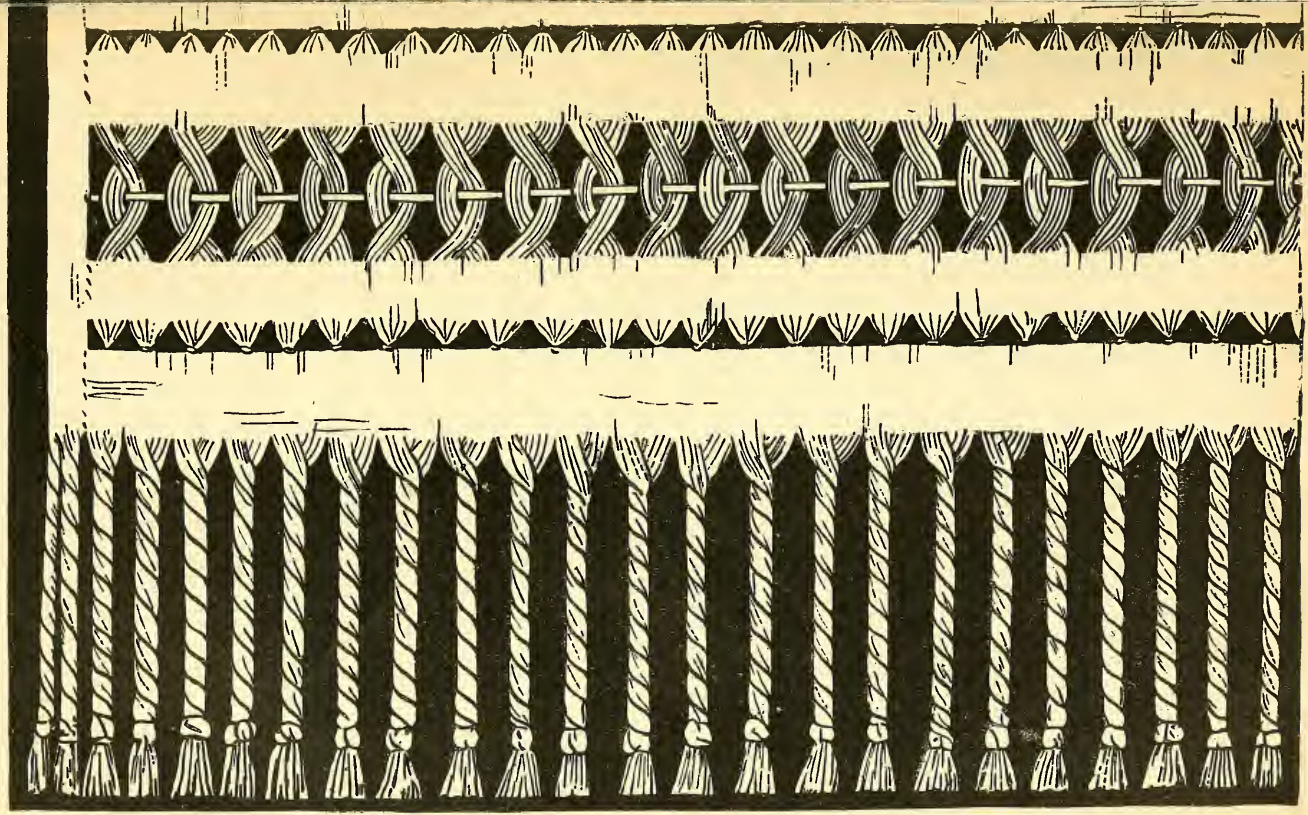
"Those Holland smocks as white as snow,
And gorgets brave, with drawn-work wrought."

THE art of drawn-work, as taught in the new schools of embroidery, is a return to the *naissance* of decorative open-work. From it, associated with cut-work and darned netting, was developed their gossamer-winged offspring—lace.

In many Old World treasuries are to be seen, among hoarded relics of a misty past, altar-cloths and winding-sheets, yellow with age and marvellously wrought on the pulled threads of fine linen. The grave-clothes of Saint Cuthbert, disinterred in the twelfth century, are described in the writings of Reginald, monk of Durham, as "fringed with linen thread of a finger's length, and adorned with a border fabricated of the thread itself, bearing the figures of birds and beasts divided by a branching tree with leaves." The secret of this work, known only to the monks who wrought it, was kept until the breaking up of the monasteries, when it was eagerly acquired by king's daughters and such great ladies as were then instructed in the decorative arts.

The earliest oriental attempts at lace were also embodied in drawn-work edging tissues from China and from Persia. Among Europeans, drawn-work was soon adopted by people of fashion for the adornment of their persons, after its emancipation from ecclesiastical monopoly.





Drawn-Work Border, for Buffet Cover.

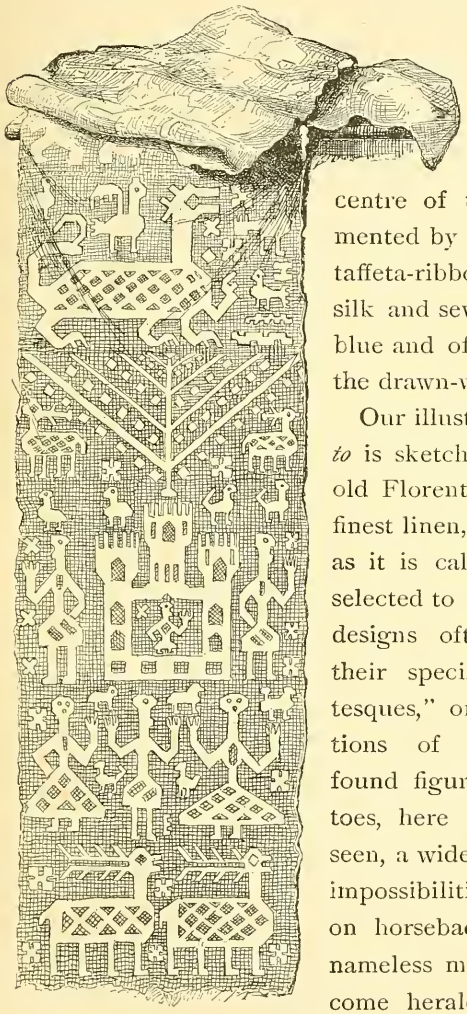
In 1545 Marguerite of France paid the sum of four livres twelve sols for a "garniture de chemise ouvré de soye cramoisie pour madicte dame." The fashion of enriching this open-work ground with colored or black silk was no doubt a token of its partnership in worldly vanities.

The smocks of Katharine of Aragon, "for to lay in," were wrought with gold and silk threads. Margaret of Austria had four pillow-cases embroidered with crimson and green silk upon drawn-work. Dom Diego de Cabrera presents to the same lady four pillow-cases with blue silk and gold lozenges on drawn-work. In 1559 appeared, in an English inventory, a charge of twenty shillings for "lengthening one smock of drawne work;" and in the same year Henry II. of France is represented at his obsequies by an effigy attired in a shroud adorned with this regal handiwork.

In England, Ireland, Russia, Denmark, Germany, Portugal; in the West Indies and in South America; in the Philippine Islands, where it is wrought upon fabrics of woven grass—this charming art has held high rank among woman's industries. The best specimens we have seen come from Italy, where it is called "punto tirato"—or from Spain, where "deshilado" is employed to the present day with excellent effect. Beautiful examples are also furnished from South America; from Mexico; and from the Southern States of our own country, where it is called "Mexican work."

The history of ornamental needlework in America has had until now so little to record, that it is pleasant to chronicle these achievements in an art most ancient and honorable of all among open-work embroideries. With us, as in days of old, this bordering of drawn threads has been generally applied to "pillow-beres" and sheets with "open seame."

linen with a round thread, decorated with a broad band geometrically treated, between two narrower ones, containing star patterns alternating with heraldic lions. The narrow oblong of linen left in the centre of this piece is ornamented by a waved line of red taffeta-ribbon gathered with red silk and sewn down. Lines of blue and of red ribbon divide the drawn-work bands.



Old Punto Tirato, or Italian Drawn-Work, from the collection of Watson & Co., Union Square.

Our illustration of *punto tirato* is sketched from a piece of old Florentine drawn-work on finest linen, or "convent lace," as it is called by the dealers, selected to show the variety of designs often lavished upon their specimens. The "grotesques," originating in imitations of imaginary animals found figured in Italian grottoes, here include, as will be seen, a wide range of amusing impossibilities. First a warrior on horseback, followed by a nameless monster, after whom come heralds blowing horns. More quaint animals preceding men on horseback. Geo-

metrical patterns serve to fill the next space. Then two heraldic griffins flanking a warlike goose. Bullocks with locked horns, fighting-cocks, stags, fowls, monsters, men and women, goats, dogs, birds, three dancing-girls like paper dolls, a castle, etc., etc., complete the list, in which no two designs are alike.

At the Metropolitan Museum of Art may be seen a pillow-cover of colored silk embroidery representing grotesques on a ground of linen drawn-work, done in Morocco, after a European design, seventy-five years ago. Turkish tambour-work is also seen there associated with drawn-work on a charming border.

During many centuries, drawn-work, with darned filet and cut-work, ruled over the fashions of luxurious Europe; but in due time it was elbowed out of place by the gorgeous point and pillow laces of the Renaissance. The introduction of dotted Mechlin and Valenciennes served to bring up a new variety of drawn-work on muslin, imitating antique lace, the threads drawn, divided and reunited, the raised effect of lace simulated by embroidered flowers, corded outlines, and even by *appliqué* patchwork. Denmark took up this fanciful industry with enthusiasm, and in Portugal it was extensively used—Portuguese traders carrying it into Africa and South America.

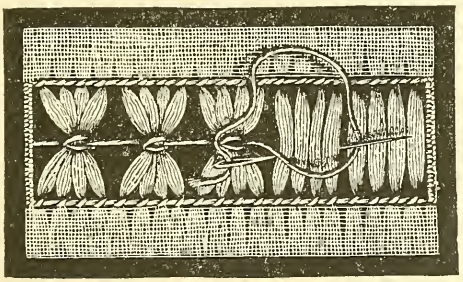
For bed-linen and table-linen throughout Brazil, in the Creva lace of Minas Geraes, and in Venezuela where it serves to edge the linen trousers of the Guachos, drawn-work is still seen.

An interesting example of the later variety of drawn-work is a handkerchief of linen cambric, embroidered by a member of the distinguished Florés family in Quito, Ecuador, for a friend in New York. The meshes made by pulling the

threads of this sheer fabric are exquisitely fine. The design of flowers left in the texture of the material is outlined with French plumetis and button-hole stitches. This resembles a fragment of lace described by Mrs. Bury Palliser as found by the Countess Gigluicci in a villa on the Adriatic, worked on the drawn threads of muslin—"an exquisite specimen of the needle's excellency."

These methods of embroidery upon drawn threads of fine textiles result in a garniture as remarkable for strength as for cobweb fineness. In this union of durability and beauty lies a supreme charm of drawn-work for household use and decoration. It is what it pretends to be, neither more nor less; borrowing no adventitious aid of ornament from foreign sources; elegant yet substantial—the finish incorporated with the stuff.

A pattern to be seen in modern Spanish work on towels and draperies, is furnished in the double-page illustration, meant to suggest to beginners the first simple combinations

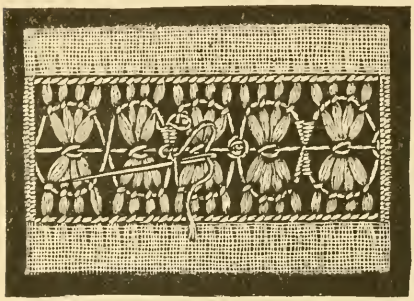


Drawn-work Stitches.

of drawn-work stitches, for use on linen or crash. For towels, table-covers, buffet-scarfs and doyleys, drawn-work is especially suitable. Beginning with the hem stitch of our grandmothers, we may add, as we progress, lace stitches,

herring-bone, buttonhole, overcasting, chain stitch, darning and knot stitch.

I. Draw the threads from the end of a piece of linen for about an inch in depth. Pass a thread through the middle of the strands that are left, crossing and catching them in bunches of two or three. This pattern can be used as the heading for fringe around doyleys.



Drawn-work Stitches.

II. Catch and secure with your needle a few threads close to the body of the stuff, at top and bottom of the drawn space. This leaves an effect of even rows of threads a little separated. Then use chain stitch to draw these rows together in bunches of four, in the centre.

III. The foregoing pattern may be elaborated by a thread introduced in a waving line over and under the bunches of threads. Repeat this waved line in returning; and, where the threads cross in the centre, finish with small figures in lace stitches.

These patterns may be varied endlessly, and an ingenious workwoman will soon find combinations for herself.

Cross-stitch embroidery, combined with drawn-work, is most effective for buffet and tray covers. These are strips of linen, fringed at either end, the rows of drawn-work alternating with bands of cross-stitch done in red washing cotton upon canvas, the canvas threads afterward withdrawn.

The Society of Decorative Art has for sale many varieties

of drawn-work on fine linen, including the specimens so admirably wrought by Miss E. J. Ronaldson, and those sent by contributors in St. Augustine, Florida.

Amber or red silk may be introduced into drawn-work with rich effect. When this is done, as in all cases where silks are used upon wash fabrics, each skein should be dropped into a separate vessel of boiling water, and left there for ten minutes, to prevent after-fading.

The fashion has lately reappeared in France of edging sheets and pillow-cases with *point tiré*, as it is there called —some elaborate examples having been brought to New York, among other "délices de la France" so common to wealthier homes in America.

OPUS ARANEUM, OR SPIDERWORK.

This was Lacis or Darned Netting, one of the first attempts made to produce lace, and is represented in modern days by point compté. In the sixteenth century, as now, it was sometimes alternated with squares of white linen, as shown by the Ballad of Hardyknute:

> "An apron set with many a dice
> Of needlework sae rare,
> Wove by nae hand, as ye may guess,
> Save that of Fairly Fair."

Fairly Fair had her hands full in those days, following the lead of the busy queens and princesses who employed themselves in darning intricate designs upon a ground-work of rézeuil or netting, then the fashionable fancy-work of all grades of society—such elaborate specimens as "Eight scenes from the Passion of our Savior," worked for an

altar hanging, still remaining in England to attest their industry.

Books of design for lacis and what, in the "School Mistris Terms of Art for all her ways of Sewing," is called "A Samcloth, vulgarly a Sampler," were extensively circulated among the ladies of the period. Of the publications in that class is one announced as follows:

"New and singular patterness and works of linen seruing for Paternes to make all sorts of Lace, Edginges and Cutworks, newlie invented for the profite & contentment of Ladies, Gentilwomen, and others who are desirous of this Art. London, 1591. Printed by J. Wolfe."

Of Italian punto a maglia or darned netting, made in quantities for bed furniture and for window shades, much has been brought for sale to America; and in Paris, a few years ago, the entire hangings of a bedroom, from a Neapolitan palace, were sold for an enormous price.

At the Metropolitan Museum may be seen an excellent specimen of old punto a maglia in a border with grotesques, representing two horses drinking from a fountain.

An old Italian table-cover has been shown us, made of soft Florentine silk, in royal violet with a border of fine reddish-brown silk network. Upon this a scroll pattern is darned with blue, silver-gray, yellow and crimson split floss. The fringe is of a lighter purple, with touches of green.

Another, of light blue silk, has a netted border of Indian red silk, darned with green and white.

Another, of blue undressed silk, has an *écru* border of cotton netting, darned with *écru* cotton in a variety of beautiful devices.

The *randa*, of Spain, corresponding to this, is repre-

sented by some beautiful pieces collected during the past summer in Seville, and brought thence to New York. Large squares of cream or white netting are elaborately darned in scroll patterns with birds, foliage, flowers and odd animals. A table-cover taken from this treasury is of cream-colored cotton stuff, with a running embroidery of flowers in colored floss silks, the border of darned netting revealing many quaint shapes of bird and beast, and what is meant to be the human form.

Modern *guipure d'art* preserves much of the beauty of old darned netting, the nature of the ground compelling a special treatment, knowing little change since the day when it was first devised.

CUT-WORK, OR POINT COUPÉ.

"Cut werke was greate both in courts and townes,
Both in menes hoddis and also in their gownes."
—Chronicle of John Harding, 1470.

THERE seems no limit to the variety of ornamental devices figuring under the name of cut-work. According to Mrs. Bury Palliser, it includes: 1st, stuff gummed to a network of threads, the pattern formed by outlining with buttonhole stitch the parts that were to remain, cutting the rest away; 2d, threads alone, arranged on a frame radiating from one common centre, and worked in various patterns. To this class belongs the old convent lace of Italy, also called Greek lace, from the Ionian Islands where it was found among the tombs adorning the vestments of the dead. Hunting the catacombs for this funeral lace, and counterfeiting it by dipping new laces in coffee, to sell to visitors, has, we are told, become a regular trade.

The fine geometric laces universally used during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were all comprised under the general name of cut-works.

Italian cut-work is famous in ancient chronicles. "French masks and cut-works" were vended by Ben Jonson's lace woman. Cut-work on linen was used in Denmark before lace came in from Brabant, and is still made by poor gentlewomen and exhibited for sale in the shop windows of Copenhagen. In Sweden, sheets seamed with cut-work, blue curtains with cut-work seams, towels with cut-work

borders with the King's arms in one corner, were inventoried, in 1548; and, to-day, Hölesom or cut-work is a favorite industry of Swedish women, and is generally taught in their schools. Napkins brought recently from the province of Scania in Sweden show charming geometrical designs in cut-work, with embroidered patterns in colored thread. Some of these modern specimens are to be seen in the South Kensington Museum, near an English sampler dated 1654, in point coupé on linen, signed with the quaint alliteration "Margreet May."

Queen Elizabeth would seem to have been the chief English patron of cut-work in every guise. Cut-work lilies spangled with seed pearl appear upon her ruffs, and varieties of the same ornament upon doublets, cushion cloths, tooth cloths, smocks and night caps. Her "mantel of lawn cut-work" is overwrought with pomegranates, roses, honeysuckles and crowns.

That the universal art prevailed in Germany, witness the title-page of another pattern-book:

"New pattern book, in which are all sorts of beautiful patterns of the new cutwork for collars, shirts, jackets and such like, such as never before were seen in Germany. Most useful. To all virtuous dames and damsels (needlewomen,) as well as to all others who take a pleasure in such artistic works, very respectfully dedicated.

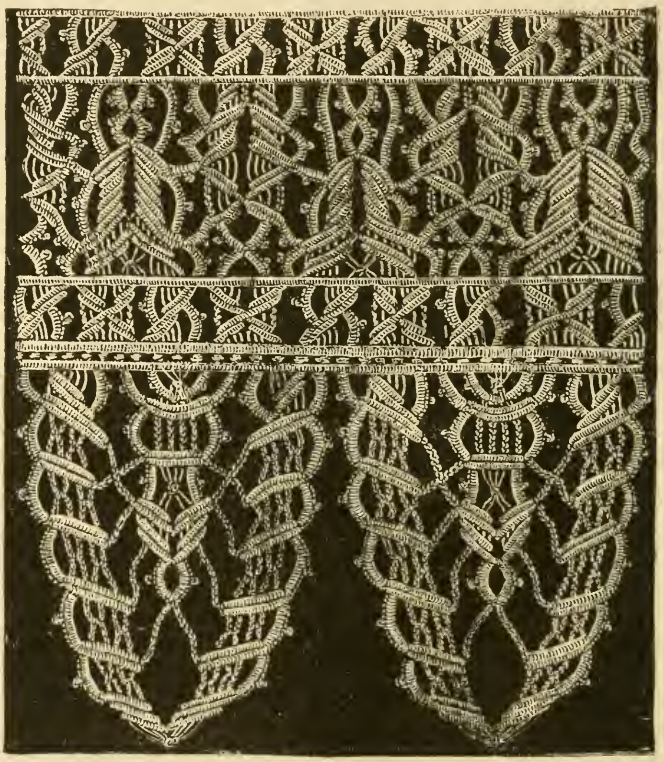
"Printed for the publisher, G. Strauben."

Modern point coupé, imitating patterns found in pictures of the seventeenth century, is made on a stout linen foundation, of which some of the threads are cut away and the remainder worked over with buttonhole stitch, making regular square spaces. This work may be enriched by outlines of gold thread and a lining of amber satin.

For curtain decoration, large patterns of coarse brown packing cloth cut out, sewed upon colored stuff, and trimmed with Macramé fringe of the same thread are most effective.

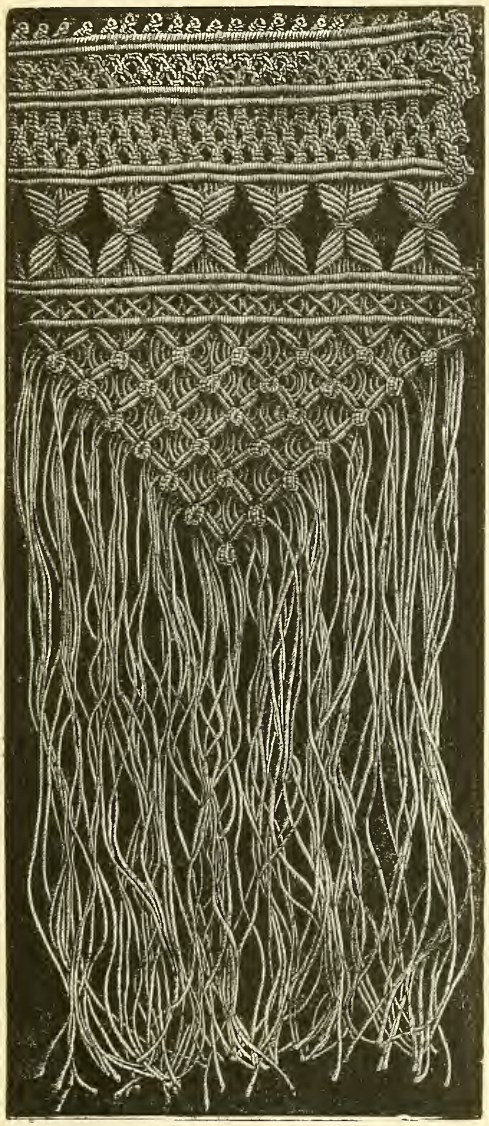
MACRAMÉ LACE.

A few years ago, the scarlet or blue pillows on which this serviceable, rough-and-ready lace was constructed, were to



Macramé. (Old Italian.)

be seen in every drawing-room ; now, they have slipped from the fingers of the fickle fair, and rolled away to some



Macramé. (Modern.)

neglected corner. It is possible that the piteous complaints made by fashionable workers, of hands chafed and wounded in handling the strong linen thread required, may in some degree account for the brief reign of Macramé.

The old painters recognized the merits of this essentially picturesque adornment, gaining its name from the Arabic, it is said—Macramé signifying "fringed border." The table drapery in Paul Veronese's picture of "Jesus in Simon's house," has a fine example of this work. For use with the coarse *écru* stuffs now popular, or for bordering a mantel-shelf or table-cover, Macramé is excellent and effective. There is a heavy quality of worsted furniture plush to be had in shades of deep maroon, blue and green, with which Macramé lace accords well as a finish.

Macramé is carried to perfection at the Albergo de' Poveri, at Genoa, where it is done by girls and children trained to copy the models of old church lace. As will be seen from the illustrations on pages 90 and 91, this work has in it too much that is truly artistic to be allowed to pass into oblivion. The chief objection to modern Macramé is the machine-like effect made by smooth tightly twisted threads.

POINT AND PILLOW LACES.

In view of the fact that so many good and exhaustive manuals on the art of modern lace-making are now to be had, it is thought best to here present the subject only in the form of an extract from Mrs. Bury Palliser's preface to her catalogue of laces in the South Kensington Museum. This gives a brief and interesting résumé of a branch of woman's ornamental handiwork, more than all others em-

ploying the industry and refining the toil of thousands of our sex.

"Lace is made of gold, silver, silk, cotton and flax, to which may be added poil-de-chèvre, and also the fibre of the aloe, employed by the peasants near Genoa and in Spain.

"It consists of two parts, the ground (*French* réseau) and the pattern.

"The ground is generally a plain network of honey-comb or six-sided meshes, variously formed in the different kinds of lace; and in some of the older descriptions, instead of the network ground, the patterns or flowers are connected by irregular threads overcast with buttonhole stitch, or fringed with loops or knots, also styled 'Thorns'—in Italian, 'punti a spina.' These are called by our English lace-makers 'Pearl Ties,' by the French 'Brides' or 'Barrettes,' and by the Italians 'Legs.' The 'Rose' Point, and many others of the needle-made laces of Italy and Spain, are thus united, and so are those old pillow laces of Flanders and the modern Honiton, to which have been assigned the name of 'Guipures.' In some kinds of lace there is no ground at all, the flowers joining each other. In the last century, lace made with the network or honeycomb ground was called 'grounded' to distinguish it from that where the pattern is united by 'ties.' In this catalogue the French terms of 'a Réseau' and 'a Bride,' are employed as more explicit than the English denominations.

"The pattern or flower, technically called 'gimp' or 'cloth,' from its compact texture, is either made together with the ground, as in Mechlin, Valenciennes and Buckingham: or separately, as in Brussels or Honiton, where it is afterward either worked into the ground or sewn on, 'applied.' The little raised cord which surrounds the pattern

is called 'Cordonnet.' The openwork or fancy stitches are termed 'Fillings' or 'Modes.'

"Lace has two edges: the upper, called 'pearl' or 'picot,' consists of a row of little points at equal distances, forming a kind of fringe to the edge; and the lower or 'footing,' a narrow lace that serves to strengthen the ground and to sew the lace to the material upon which it is to be worn.

"Lace is divided into two classes, point and pillow. Point is made with a needle on a parchment pattern; pillow by the weaving, twisting and plaiting of the threads with bobbins, upon the well-known cushion which bears its name.

"The principal point laces are the ancient laces of Italy, Spain and Portugal, and the more modern lace of France, called Point d'Alençon. The pillow-laces are those of Mechlin, Lille, Valenciennes, Honiton, Buckingham and many manufactories in France. Brussels makes both point and pillow.

"Though the word 'point' strictly implies needle-made lace, yet it is also used to designate any particular manufacture. In common parlance we say Mechlin point, Honiton point, etc., although these are all pillow made."

The present collection of laces at the Metropolitan Museum of art is a delightful illustration of the various methods employed, as well as of the characteristic treatment bestowed by different periods upon their specimens.

Tape-guipure, made of linen tape twisted and folded into a pattern, held together with bars and then filled in and enriched with needlework, is well suited for decoration.

Irish lace, made of flax-thread with a ground-work of crochet, into which are introduced varieties of beautiful lace stitches, is made and sold in New York by poor immi-

grants. Lamp-shades, trimmings for mantel-boards and tea-tables, children's bibs, and dress-trimmings have met a ready sale among ladies to whose attention they have been called.

Devonshire lace is also, though more rarely, made and sold in New York.

Jersey crochet, imitating the old raised points, is occasionally bought from the makers in America.

Quaint Dalecarlian lace of an antique pattern has been brought to America by Swedish peasants immigrating to the far West. It is used by them to adorn house-linen, but more especially as a border for their caps. Visitors to their settlements in Minnesota have been struck with the spectacle of one of these transplanted peasant women seated at her cabin door engaged in the manufacture of lace after patterns known in Europe hundreds of years ago.

PART II.

BRUSH AND PIGMENT.

"In a land of clear colors and stories,
In a region of shadowless hours."

—SWINBURNE.

"All tendrils green of every bloom and hue
Together intertwined and tramell'd fresh,
The vine of glossy sprout, the ivy mesh
Shading its Ethiop berries; and woodbine
Of velvet leaves and bugle blooms divine,
Convolvulus in streaked vases flush,
The creeper mellowing for an autumn blush,
And virgin's bower trailing airily
With others of the sisterhood."

—KEATS.

". . . . a certain brightly painted china plate, whose bird of Paradise, nestling in a wreath of convolvuli and rosebuds, had been wont to stir in me a most enthusiastic sense of admiration."—CHARLOTTE BRONTÉ.

VOLKMAR JAR PORCELAIN TILE BENNETT LAMP IVORY WARE BENNETT JAR

DECORATED FAIENCE AND PORCELAIN

BRUSH AND PIGMENT.

CHINA PAINTING.

A FEW years ago, in New York, the amateur decorators of porcelain jugs and jars and tiles were few and scattered, like lingering autumn leaves upon a branch ; to-day, they crop up on every side, like spring-time daisies. In the boudoir or morning-room, where of old the Penelope's web of worsted-work was wont to languish, may now be found, *tête-à-tête* with the graceful basket of soft-hued crewels, a little table bearing an equipage of tools and tubes and brushes, with, perhaps, a half finished vase of ivory-tinted ware, over which the fair artist sits for hours, blending, stippling, sketching, outlining, with ever increasing absorption. It must be confessed also, that the odors of violet, which are supposed to float from the presence of refined womanhood, are sadly overcome by the combined fragrance of turpentine and lavender or—worse—oil of aniseed, which persistently haunt the porcelain painter's studio.

The experience of those who have been fortunate enough to secure the teaching of the best instructors in China painting bears witness to the fact that a very small outfit is necessary in the earlier lessons. A six-inch porcelain tile ; a couple of camel's-hair brushes, one rather broad and flat, the other long and fine for outlining ; a small cup of tur-

pentine ; a rest for the arm, either attached to the table at which the work is done, or separate, like a bridge to stretch across the tile ; another tile used as a palette upon which the pupil finds a small quantity of a few colors (green, brown, orange and pink, perhaps); a lithographer's crayon with which to sketch the design—and the equipment for the lesson is complete.

"First learn to draw," ought to be the axiom for the aspiring china painter. The despair of a teacher may well be imagined, to whom comes a young lady demanding imperiously to undertake, at the second lesson, the decoration of a vase, "not one of those tiresome little tiles, but something worth putting upon the mantel-shelf at home." Upon inquiry, it is revealed that she cannot draw a blade of grass, has never taken a lesson before, but "loves color, and fancied that the whole thing is principally mechanical work, and has always been complimented upon her eye for effects."

The pupil who is blessed with patient diffidence, takes her place before the table and, after wiping with turpentine the surface of the tile she designs to experiment upon, proceeds to sketch, with a light and free hand, the spray of leaves and blossoms placed before her as a model. This done, the outlines should be gone over with a brush dipped in India ink (or any water color), to fix it. The broader brush is softened in turpentine, then charged with the paint required for the foliage, and a pale uniform tint laid on. The amount of expression possible from one brushful of paint, in the hand of the master, is astonishing and delightful to the amateur. The skilled hand directs the brush from the extreme tip of the leaf, with a broadening sweep down through the centre, to the stem again—and behold, there are lights and shades, sun-flecks and veinings,

all revealed! To accomplish as much as is possible with one stroke, to avoid minutiæ and feeble stippling, is absolutely necessary for the free style of decoration all the world admires to-day. The flowers are tinted next, working from the centre outward, the color softened materially as the light strikes the petals. With the use of turpentine as a medium, this is soon dry, and one may now return to the shading of the leaves with the browns, olive greens and soft grays used for the purpose. The petals of the flowers can be shaded with a gray, mixed from rose color and green; and last of all comes the outlining, a welcome moment to most amateurs, who find that the firm bold outline of brown or purple-brown, around leaf and stem and flower, gives strength to many a weak spot, and covers a multitude of sins.

From her first timid essays upon tiles, the worker goes gradually to the more exciting decoration of *plaque* or jar. And if her portfolio contains sketches that are available, bits of nature garnered from summer wanderings—a tangle of buttercups in meadow grass—wild roses opening their pink hearts to the sun—a stem of flaunting hollyhocks, or of golden rod arising where the daisies have passed away—what more delightful, when winter comes, than to live over the vanished glory of out-of-doors, transferring it to porcelain and endowing it with the gift of enduring lustre conferred by the furnace fire!

All this is a work of time, of absolute patience, of continuing practice. It would be impossible here to enumerate one-half the mysteries of the *technique* of china painting. For the paints to be used, the beginner is strongly advised to avail herself of Lacroix's Enamel Colors in tubes, which possess the supreme advantage of being ready for use at

any moment; she may thus escape the long and toilsome process of grinding and mixing, necessary with the powder colors. The "*Vert bleu riche*," the "*Vert, No. 6, Brun*," and the "*Jaune Jonquille*" of the Lacroix tubes, for instance, cannot be too highly praised. As the student progresses in mastery of the art, it follows that the stock of materials is enlarged; but, for advice on this point, there are several excellent manuals to be had of any bookseller. The facilities for firing amateur work are increasing in New York, and it is hoped that the care to be taken in future by proprietors of such kilns will leave no occasion for many of the bitter complaints made by those who have suffered at their hands in the past.

In using English powder colors, or the tube colors of Lacroix, the worker is almost certain of reclaiming her plaque or tile from the kiln in the same general tone of color with which it entered there. A very few weeks of experience will teach the scholar more of the pitfalls to be avoided in the use and mixture of colors and in the employment of mediums, than can be taught by any teacher in any course of lectures. A plaque of wild roses or apple blossoms that comes home from the kiln all faded out in streaks of dingy pink, with the green of the foliage unpleasantly crude and the background "bubbling" with fat oil, is in itself a lesson for which one pays at a dear rate of sad experience. To the beginner in china painting there seem to be more thorns than roses in the decoration she is scattering over her cups and plates; but with patience and repeated effort, keeping nature before her as the best guide, by working up step by step from one simple subject to the other, it is possible to produce very pleasing results within a not unreasonable time. "What shall I do with my ex-

periments?" is a question often asked in the early days. "Shall I keep this tile or plaque? Destroy it I cannot, and to give it away I am ashamed!" Preserve it by all means. A few months hence, and a glance at its "cruel immortality" will inspire you with infinite cheer at thought of the progress made.

Painting on Pottery, Underglaze.

By and by a day comes when the student, looking away from her porcelain tiles and plaques, sighs for new worlds to conquer. How tempting is underglaze work, where tender transparent flowers and soft brown-green foliage are painted upon jars and vases of delightful shape in creamy clay, to issue from the fire clad in a veil of dazzling sheen!

But painting upon faïence, like the holy estate of matrimony, is not to be entered upon lightly or unadvisedly! The colors used are different from those employed for porcelain, coming to their full brightness and quality only by being developed by the exact heat necessary to fuse the glaze and by the action of the glaze upon the colors. The brilliant enamel qualities of this glaze result from the skilful management of the half-fire required to bring them to perfection; therefore, underglaze work, no matter how well done by the painter, is at the mercy of the kiln.

At a time when public taste is every day more steadily inclining to the accumulation of objects in faïence, it may be well to say something especial with regard to it.

What we popularly call studio effects in modern dwellings demand this conspicuous class of ceramic ornament. The rich colors melting one into the other, the beautiful shapes,

the high lustre of underglaze work, harmonize to perfection with half lights stealing through windows of stained glass, with quiet tones, heavy folds, oriental dyes as we now employ them, in rooms where a rose Du Barry plate or vase of finest Sevrès would lose half of its effect.

A charm of Fortuny's studio was his Hispano-Moresco lustred pottery, vases and azulejos, dull in color and depending for effect upon a low-toned metallic glaze—described by Baron Charles Davillier in his "Atelier de Fortuny." The true artist in house decoration knows what value to place on a bit of Montelupo ware in coarse brown glaze, a *bacile* or circular dish of Caffaggiolo lustre, an Urbino drug-pot, or a Delft plaque marked with the Porcelain Hatchet. Modern English potters have put within our reach reproductions of that exquisite (so-called "Henri Deux") faïence bequeathed to the world by the lady Hélène de Hangest-Genlis—the ware of the Chateau d'Oiron.

In the studio of a distinguished American artist is a shelf containing a number of antique Chinese vases in high glaze, sang de bœuf, céladon, gray, rose, mandarin, yellow—each a perfect example of its kind, and all grouped by the owner against a wall space hung in Japanese brocades. The effect of this burst of color is superb.

Underglaze painting on clay has become a prominent feature among the productions of leading English potters such as Doulton & Watts, and Minton, the latter having also revived old Italian majolica; and to Minton's unmatched artist, Solon, the world is indebted for an exquisite style of ceramic ornamentation, low relief carving in clay, known as pâte-sur-pâte. In these and in other English manufactories, much of the work of ornamenting the clay is done by women. Their services find ready welcome and

remunerative employment in this refined branch of art work. This is what we may hope to see in the United States, when work under the glaze shall have attained its due measure of importance here.

Swiss faïence is coarse but effective in color. A Hungarian faïence is a beautiful novelty, recently introduced in New York. This ware, manufactured by Pécs, at Fünfkirchen, in Hungary, near the borders of Turkey, has five steeples for a trade-mark. The decorations are strongly Turkish in design and color.

Russia sends excellent bits of decorative earthenware; and the old art in Italy is awakening with new strength.

It is to France, however, that America owes her strongest influence in the rage for modern art pottery. Laurin ware, made at Bourg-la-Reine, near Paris, was the first of this class to delight New Yorkers. In it, the paints are mineral colors mixed with vitrifiable earth. A pair of large Moorish vases have a background of gray, with splashes of pearl, silver, white, fawn and black. A sleepy cupid taking his ease upon a wheat-sheaf beneath a tangled thicket of leaves and briars, is the subject upon each.

A large plaque of Laurin faïence has a yellowish brown bird of the hawk family swinging on the branch of an acacia tree, amid profuse clusters of white flowers and black-green foliage shading to tenderer tints. A blue sky, streaked with yellow, completes as brilliant a bit of decoration as one could desire upon the wall in a shady corner.

Two vases of mottled celadon green, in the same collection, have upon the background visible marks of the brush, a peculiarity of this faïence. A broad decoration of vines and flowers surrounds birds and butterflies gayly tinted in blue, gleaming like sapphire and deepening to

the famous black of which Laurin is said to be the discoverer.

With the popular "Limoges" or "Haviland" ware, most Americans are familiar. In the new order of house decoration, this has been so universally adopted, that any description of it seems superfluous.

Deck, without doubt the great and shining light among decorative potters, is represented in America by a number of superb specimens in possession of private collectors. A prominent dealer in Union Square has recently exhibited some examples of this famous ware, selected, as are all of his choice importations, with true artistic feeling. Among these a large plaque in mandarin yellow—the tint called by Zeigler (author of "Histoire de la Céramique") "oldest daughter of the light"—has the design of a parrot and foliage under transparent glaze. The flowers on this are of the rich purple characteristic of the artist's work. A Deck jardinière and vases in deep transparent blue, with a flat decoration of pinkish purple flowers, brought last year from France by a lady of New York, are rarely beautiful. A plaque has a ground tinted like the plumage of the golden pheasant, with an imbricated pattern carelessly traced upon it by the point of the brush. The design is a white Japanese flower with brilliant turquoise-blue foliage. One of Deck's fancies is for peach blossom tinted flowers, with green-blue foliage, on a ground of ocean blue or of silvery pearl. His conventional coloring is exceptionally fine.

The beautiful faïence produced in New York by John Bennett—who was one of Doulton's leading men, was domiciled for a time in a modest studio in Lexington Avenue, and is now the proprietor of a large and busy establishment on East Twenty-fourth Street—has done much to educate

public taste in the matter of this species of decorative ware. Bennett's style is marked by free-handed sketching of flowers and foliage ; by admirably transparent color laid on in broad washes—each fearless stroke of the brush resulting in the desired effect of texture ; by strong rich backgrounds of shaded deep blue or red-orange, or of gray-green toned with black, painted after the decoration is colored, but before the outlines are applied ; and by a perfection in glaze which is rarely surpassed by his most famous contemporaries. The Bennett jar, drawn by Mr. Gibson in illustration of this method, is decorated with an American flower first shown to him here by a lady who brought it from Maryland in early springtime, and which the artist has adopted as a favorite design—the blossom of the dogwood—with conventional coloring of rich maroon. The lamp is an instance of Mr. Bennett's successful treatment of that most difficult of all pigments in pottery decoration, cobalt blue—the blue of old Italian majolica, now rarely seen.

John Bennett's pupils—among them Miss H. R. Ely, Miss W. M. Peabody and Mrs. T. McClurg—have shown the results of his admirable system of training. The advantage of lessons from such a master in pottery decoration is incalculable to the student; it lays the foundation of a broad style in manipulation and color, pre-eminently desirable.

Charles Volkmar, at present director of the classes in painting on faïence after the Limoges manner, at the rooms of the Society of Decorative Art, is noted for his designs of landscape and cattle, one of which is here illustrated in a jar drawn by Mr. Gibson.

Some of Mr. Volkmar's pupils have been able to exhibit very creditable specimens of underglaze work in the rooms

of the Society. A jar with trumpet flowers on a ground of clouded gray; a lamp with lilies on a dark green surface; another green-gray ground with woodbine carrying blue and purple berries, are all cleverly done. A *tête-à-tête* tea-set has attracted favorable notice. This has a design of cherry-blossoms upon a pale yellow ground, with greenish brown bands around the edges and on the handles, spouts and tops. On the tea-pot is inscribed the motto :

"Come, give us a taste of your quality,"

and on the sugar-bowl,

"A box where sweets compacted lie."

Much of the work done by Miss McLaughlin, of Cincinnati, in underglaze painting, has taken rank with the best foreign specimens.

From her recent manual of underglaze painting with clay colors—a valuable aid for the amateur decorator—we select a few hints on the methods this accomplished lady has successfully pursued :

"Those who have not been accustomed to the use of color in such masses will perhaps be embarrassed at first by the difficulty of painting with clay. This will soon be overcome by practice, it being taken for granted that any one desiring to practise this kind of painting should have already acquired a knowledge of the rules which govern art. With regard to the colors to be used it is enough to say that a sufficient number can be obtained to produce, by admixture in various degrees, tints for the production of any subject required. It is only necessary to remember that in these mixtures the stronger colors must not be in such proportion as to overpower the weaker.

"Underglaze decorations can be as varied in regard to subjects as paintings on canvas. Floral decorations seem to be the best adapted to vases or other objects having rounded surfaces. Plaques and vases such as pilgrim jars, which afford flat surfaces, may also be decorated with landscapes or figures. Decorations of a similar character can be produced upon ware of different colors, leaving the color of the clay for a ground. Monochrome decorations can also be produced, by the use of natural clays of various colors, in the same manner as that pursued in the use of the artificially tinted clay.

"When the painting has been completed it should dry very slowly, and it would be better, if possible, to effect this by placing it in a moist, cool place. It is, however, difficult to handle a piece of ware when wet. The clay is in a very soft state, and a sudden jar might cause the vase to fall to pieces. If the vase has not been in proper condition for painting, or has dried too quickly, it will, after some hours have elapsed, begin to show fine cracks upon the surface of the painting. These may be stopped, before they have gone too far, by passing a modelling tool over them, or, if the crack has become too deep for this treatment, it may be filled with clay as nearly as possible in the state at which the body of the ware has arrived. If the cracks are allowed to go too far, it will be difficult to stop them, as they may have extended into the body of the ware. If the piece is permitted to go to the firing with any cracks, however small, upon its surface, they will become widened in the firing and, especially after the glazing, will show very distinctly. In the biscuit they may be stopped by filling them with powdered clay mixed with gum-water. But an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, and the safest

method is to prevent their appearance in the first place. If this cannot be done, they must be stopped as soon as they appear. The finer clays seem to have a greater tendency to crack in drying, and when the cracks have appeared they are more difficult to stop than in other clays.

"When the piece decorated is thoroughly dry, it should be fired at a temperature sufficient to make the body durable, and at the same time to perfectly fix the colors of the painting, so that there may be no danger that the glaze will cause them to run in the final firing. The temperature at which the work is to be fired must, of course, depend upon the qualities of the clay of which the piece of ware is made. It may be said that the temperature at which Rockingham ware is fired is suitable for this work, and that a glaze such as that used upon that kind of ware can be used with good results."

The spirit of the lady of Oiron and of the Baronne de Meillonas (the latter, about 1765, established and carried on successfully a pottery in her own chateau) has in more than one instance recently reappeared among the women of America. In Cincinnati, the active interest taken by Mrs. George Ward Nichols in the development of the potter's art has led her to build and equip kilns for her own use, thereby securing the great desideratum of amateur workers in underglaze decoration—a fire regulated to suit the ware under treatment. This enterprise has gone into operation with every prospect of success; and, as the men employed in experimenting under Mrs. Nichols' direction with different clays and shapes can make more pieces than she has time to decorate, her kilns are filled with tea-sets, jugs, etc., in plain tinted ware, to be sold at wholesale prices—little more than the price of common white stone

china. This puts within the reach of persons of limited means many pretty objects for table ornament. The first customer at the kilns is said to have been an appreciative blacksmith of the neighborhood.

Specimens of Mrs. Nichols' excellent work, with clay colors, and with underglaze colors mixed with white clay to give them body, have been admired in New York. Others have been sent, by request, to Boston, to illustrate a lecture given by Mr. Edward Atkinson, before the Thursday Club.

Miss Rosina Emmet is well known as a successful painter of portrait plaques. Her charming art is often devoted to the portrayal of children, posed and costumed after the quaint fashion of Miss Penelope Boothby—or of the little Millais maiden, "Cherry Ripe," who has recently been domesticated in so many nurseries by the Christmas number of the London *Graphic*. We prophesy as warm a welcome for the dainty darling here presented to our readers.

From a partnership of two young ladies, Misses Whitney & Chandler, of Lancaster, Mass., have come a number of spirited pieces in ivory-colored ware, having floral designs admirably drawn and painted in flat color. These ladies have been working together for a number of years decorating china, stoneware, pottery, etc., in a great many shapes and styles. Some of their best specimens have been from time to time exhibited here by the Society of Decorative Art, where the bread-and-milk bowls, "little pitchers," berry sets, and cups-and-saucers decorated with hops, oats, thistles, columbines, buttercups, clover and "daffydowndillies," are always in demand.

Among graduates of the Cooper Union Art School, favor-

ably known for skill in fictile decoration, are Miss A. Wood, and Miss M. A. E. Carter.

Miss Annie Lee has exhibited, through the Society of Decorative Art, some very strong designs upon incised pottery.

Many of the beautiful lamps already mentioned, are the work of Mrs. E. Wickes, whose specimens are everywhere admired.

English Tile-Screen.

A tile-screen, framed in mahogany or in ebonized wood, offers a useful suggestion for the employment of hand-painted tiles, of which amateurs are often at a loss to dispose, when finished. There are three folds, each enclosing an oblong tile with a square tile at top and bottom. Figures may be painted on the oblong tiles, and on the others a conventional pattern continued across the three panels of the screen, like a border, at top and bottom. This is available to conceal an unused grate in summer time.

Tiles in Decoration.

Tiles may be framed and used for teapot rests; and a hearth or fireplace of ornamental tiles still employs the energies of some painters upon porcelain, although the present fashion tends more toward adopting majolica embossed tiles, with their superb green-blues, blacks, grays and crimsons, underglaze, or the beautiful and picturesque Spanish azulejos.

Tiles with Figure Designs.

An oblong porcelain tile is painted with a girl in a short-waisted yellow gown of the first Empire period, holding a fan of peacock's feathers in her hand. Beside her is a vase containing a shrub of flowering almond. This is framed in maroon velvet.

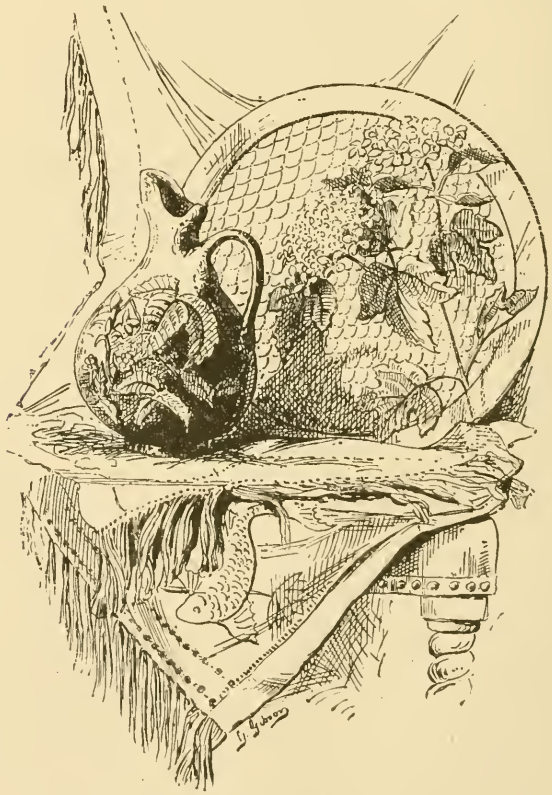
Another, similarly framed, has for subject Keats' hapless Isabella, where she

> "Hung over her sweet Basil evermore,
> And moistened it with tears unto the core."

Plaques.

In this connection, we offer to our readers a very clear and suggestive quotation from a recent circular addressed to the competitors in the spring exhibition of Messrs. Howell & James in London: "It is particularly recommended that dark-colored grounds be adopted—sage greens, bronze-browns, blues, etc., in graduated tints; that when flowers are painted they be confined to one sort, and all designs arranged so as to cover the whole plaque as far as possible. It is important that all subjects should be well and faithfully drawn (from nature where possible), and broadly and artistically treated. Plates or plaques of from twelve to sixteen inches in diameter are found to be the most salable sizes; and the following subjects, if well executed, are always readily disposed of: Pretty rural scenes with children, after the style of Birket Foster; graceful figures, in pairs, on oblong panels from eight to fifteen inches in length; artistic groupings of single flowers as described above; also

picturesque heads (female heads, in particular), with floral and ornamental backgrounds and sober coloring in the drapery; landscapes, on square or oblong slabs. Special attention is directed to long panels (in one or more pieces), varying in length from fifteen to thirty-two inches, decorated with tall-growing flowering plants or flowers and tinted backgrounds; for these there is a growing demand."



PAINTING ON SILK OR SATIN IN WATER-COLOR.

THE best quality of material should be chosen for this purpose. Lay the necessary length flat upon a drawing-board, and secure it around the edge with tacks or mucilage. A sheet of paper is used to rest the hand upon while working, and the design may then be sketched with a black-lead pencil, or, which is safer even in the case of an original design, transferred by red or blue paper. Only a practised hand should attempt to draw directly on the silk, as the pencil marks yield to neither bread-crumb nor India rubber. Go over the lines left by tracing-paper with Chinese white, used thick, to avoid the possibility of the color overrunning its proper boundary. This is the chief difficulty in water-color painting on silk, and there are various methods of confronting it. Mucilage is employed, or a special preparation bought of dealers in artists' materials, as well as isinglass dissolved in water and used while warm. There is, however, some risk of injuring the silk by this means, and many workers dispense altogether with preparation. Gouache colors, *i.e.*, colors mixed with opaque white, are employed by the best artists in painting upon silk or satin. Sometimes two or three coatings of color will be absorbed before the material retains the solid surface necessary for painting. Satin de Lyons, of a fine close quality, may be used with water-colors alone—making only the high lights with Chinese white.

Beginning with leaves, see that the first color is laid on flat. Cover the outlines with the lightest general tint of the leaf, mixing gamboge and Prussian blue to produce it. Then, with the addition of a little blue to make a middle tint, draw, with your brush, the anatomy of the leaf. When this dries, add the shading color, blue predominating in the shadow of the leaf, the tint warmer in the light. Emphasize the points and edges, and in some cases the veins of the leaf, by touches of deep brown, black or blue.

When it is desired to paint white flowers in shadow, thin the Chinese white with water, and brush it lightly over the material. This produces a delicate gray tint. In other cases, the general rule is to lay the color on thick, using Chinese white liberally.

In painting figures on silk or satin, use, for flesh effects, lemon yellow mixed with Chinese white and a touch of vermilion. The first wash, evenly laid, is generally all that is required for heads. The features are afterward done with gray-brown for eyes, carmine for lips, vermilion for nostrils. Blonde hair is made by mixing lemon yellow with brown or gray, retouching with lemon yellow for effects of light. For drapery, begin with the lightest general tone of color, then lay on the necessary shades in gradation.

Landscapes are begun on the sky line with faint blue, deepening near the horizon into yellow or pink. Trees at a distance are touched with emerald green or purplish pink. Those in the foreground are done in a subdued green. There is always color on the palette to blend into a nondescript neutral tint for shading.

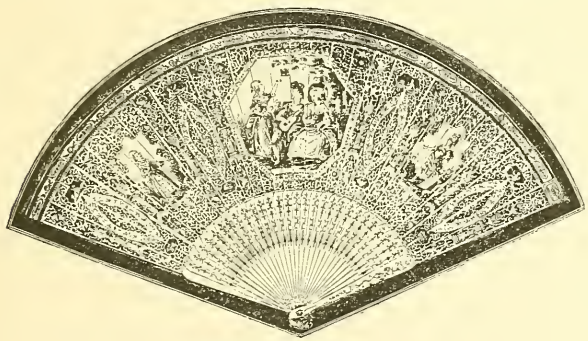
Fan Painting.

Since the Fan Exhibition at South Kensington, in 1870, a great impulse has been given to collecting and decorating fans, in England and America. As in other museums resulting from amateur effort, those trophies are reckoned of most value about which one can say, like Ninette, in Austin Dobson's verse :

"I swear upon this fan,
My grandmother's!"

But in default of an inherited treasure, the charming art of fan-painting may be called on to produce a substitute.

In painting fans, satin, silk, paper or vellum are used for material. Vellum is incomparably the best surface for the



"I swear upon this fan,
My grandmother's."

brush, but it requires exquisite delicacy of touch, accuracy and high finish at every stage of the work. Silk and satin are therefore most generally used. Fans are always painted before mounting. The material is secured upon a board, as in the directions before given for painting upon silk or

satin; the segment of a circle of the desired size is next traced upon the material, when the gouache colors may be applied.

Pastoral subjects, flower-subjects or sketches in monochrome are most popular for fan designs.

Black silk or satin fans are effective when done in grisaille or in monochrome—*i.e.*, painting in a single shade of color, strengthened with the same tint. Grisaille is work in black or gray, with the lights done in Chinese white. If this seems too cold, add brown in the shadows and warm the gray with faint touches of pink.

Garlands of tea-roses or detached buds and sprays, clematis, convolvulus, violets, cyclamen, jasmine, orange blossoms, white and purple lilac, are good subjects for fan decoration. The fairy-like scenes of Watteau, delicately drawn, warmly tinted, or the bluish landscapes of Boucher; amorini playing at skipping rope; masquerading cupids, like those done by Solon in his marvellous *pâte-sur-pâte;* classic groups, temples and ruins—are also suitable for this fascinating work.

Oil-Colors upon Silk or Satin.

In using oil paints with silk or satin, begin by squeezing out the tube colors on blotting paper, which will absorb the oil in the paint and prevent a stain upon the material. Lay ox-gall over the design you have drawn or transferred, before applying the paint. Then charge your brush with the highest general tone of color, and accomplish what you can with a single sweep, taken, if possible, parallel to the rib of the silk, not across the woof. A second application of color should supply the shading; a third, the deepest shadows.

For blending colors use only the palette knife upon the palette. Do not attempt this with your brush upon the silk or satin. Cake magnesia, rubbed on the wrong side of the material, is said to be useful in absorbing oil. It can easily be brushed off when the paint is dry.

Oil-Colors upon Plush.

Charming effects are produced by the use of oil-colors upon plush. This can only be done by employing a stiff bristle brush to stamp the color well in upon the body of the plush. A fire-screen of garnet plush, painted with a stalk of sunflowers, and another of dark blue stamped plush with a luxuriant bough of dogwood in blossom, have been much admired.

Water-Color Painting on Sateen.

This material is very satisfactory as a background for figures, painted in water-color. No contributions to the rooms of the Society of Decorative Art have been more generally admired than the screens illustrating this method painted by Miss Kellogg. The color chosen in sateen is usually an old-gold or golden fawn ; the designs, landscapes and figures are tinted after the Watteau fashion. A screen in three panels has woodland scenes, where the sunshine streams through boughs of overarching green. The first panel displays a dear little old-time damsel with poke bonnet, mittens and kerchief, straying through the woods, idly trailing a sunflower behind her, the impersonation of careless maidenhood for whom Time stands still! On the next panel, two pretty gossips are twining each an arm around

the other's waist; and on the third, a saucy pink-ribboned girl with dimples and cherry cheeks stands waiting her lover in a forest glade.

A banner screen, with the same background, represents Marguerite picking her daisy to pieces, while supposed to be murmuring "He loves me—he loves me not."

The peculiar softness of this style of work makes it deservedly a favorite among skilful colorists.

Painting on Coarse Brown Paper.

For screens, panels, dados, friezes, etc., painted in oils or in water-colors, stout brown paper such as paper-hangers use for backing, makes an effective ground. The design should be sketched on a bold scale with charcoal, the color put on in broad sweeps. If water-colors are used, lay a foundation of Chinese white over the design.

Turner's "Angry Swans," painted in white upon a piece of common brown wrapping-paper, which had been used around a parcel, is a precious relic of the master's genius. We offer this as a suggestive inspiration to the amateur!

Water-Colors on Linen.

Screens for the nursery have been painted upon gray linen in water-color, with very good effect. A screen to surround the wash-stand in a spare bedroom might be painted on this material in the following designs. Upon one panel, bulrushes rising from a pool with lily pads floating on it; among the high stalks is a bird's nest woven of grass and moss, the bird swooping down from above to seek it. On the next panel, a clump of pink foxgloves

with growing wheat. Upon the third panel, water, with tall bearded grass upon the margin. The bough of a tree leaning over this has a spider's web, with its wary occupant.

Mount the panels in a plain frame of oak or ash.

Painting on Tapestry.

This fashionable art has been introduced in America from Paris, through a few interesting specimens remarkable for depth and delicacy of color. The material employed is a kind of pliable ribbed canvas, and the pigments are rather dyes than paints. These are rubbed into the canvas, producing a velvet softness on the surface, but rendering it difficult to obtain delicate lines or minute finish.

The work is therefore best suited for landscapes, for decorative figure painting, for flowers, or for any bold designs in ornament. The canvas is specially prepared for tapestry painting ; and the dyes, in a liquid state, are sold in bottles, for use with a hog's-hair brush. Imitated tapestry was long ago used in England, under the name of "stayned cloth," and the workers of it were made a London guild. Exeter Cathedral had several pieces of old stained cloth ; and the will of Katherine, Lady Hastings, bequeaths "an old hanging of counterfeit arras of Knollys."

"Paintings on canvas in imitation of tapestry," says a recent writer, "are the rage at present in London. An exhibition of this revived branch of art has been held in Regent Street, at which Sir Coutts Lindsay and the artist Watts awarded a number of prizes given by the Duchess of Teck and other patronesses and patrons. Lady Warwick took a prize for a fire-screen, with monogram and flowers,

and M. Grenié, a French professional, a silver medal for an exact imitation of Gobelins tapestry."

Painting upon Mirrors.

This was an old Venetian art, and latterly has reappeared in Rome and elsewhere. The design, traced with a lithographer's pencil, is painted in oils. Mirror frames of gilded oak have been decorated with a long trailing spray of flowers drooping on the glass, or with wreaths of autumn leaves painted upon frame and mirror.

Visitors to the house of the artist Boughton, in London, have admired the device of a single lily, painted upon the surface of a mantel mirror, which, they are told, was placed there to conceal a woful crack made by a lamp upon the chimney-piece.

Painting on Gilded Canvas.

Gilded canvas is a beautiful background for oil-painting intended for decorative use. It may be had costing from seventy-five cents to $1 a square foot.

A quaint and charming tea-screen was made with three panels of gilded canvas, the central one rising above the other two, framed in variegated bamboo. Bunches of chrysanthemums and other autumn flowers were painted in oils upon the folds.

A small banner-screen of gilded canvas has a bough of dogwood in blossom, painted in oils. This is bordered with maroon velvet and lined with maroon silk.

Upon an oblong panel of gilded canvas, framed in maroon velvet,

"Heavily hangs the broad sunflower;"

while a companion panel displays a stalk of tasselled Indian corn.

Wall-friezes designed by Mr. Tiffany, and painted on gilded or silvered canvas by the young ladies employed in his atelier, show admirable work.

Artists' Palettes.

"There is a rage nowadays," says *The Parisian*, "for palettes illustrated and signed. In every window where pictures or curiosities are sold you see palettes. The price varies from fifty sous up to five hundred francs. The fashion, it appears, comes from America. The history is this: a clever curiosity dealer, wishing to get himself out of difficulties, and not knowing how, conceived a luminous idea. He paid a visit to the studio of a famous painter. A finished picture stood on the easel. The dealer regretted that want of funds prevented him from buying it, but he offered to buy the palette with all the brilliant colors still on it. The artist was struck with the idea. With a few touches he ran the colors into a sort of landscape, put his initials in the corner, and the dealer insisted on giving him a hundred francs. This little comedy was repeated in fifty studios. Then the dealer embarked for America, sold his palettes and returned with a fortune, and now he is the proprietor of a busy *brasserie* in the *quartier* des Martyrs"!

The brown wood palettes, to be had of all dealers in artists' materials, are still fashionable ornaments, when decorated with sprays of flowers or with tiny landscapes painted in oils. A brilliant cluster of scarlet, yellow, orange and maroon nasturtiums makes a good effect; and the palette may be hung upon the wall against a square of paste-

board covered with maroon velvet—half a dozen peacock's feathers thrust through the aperture for the thumb. Small white or gray palettes are painted in water-color with sprays of apple blossom, holly berries, etc., according to the season, as gift cards, or for *menus*. A bow of narrow satin ribbon, with short ends, is usually tied to them. Bunches of dried rice, of oats or of any graceful sprays of grass or grain are sometimes inserted, instead of peacock's feathers, in palettes hung upon the wall—the stalks bound with a bow of satin ribbon and left exposed to view.

Menus and Dinner Cards.

The character of design for ménus and dinner cards is almost without limitation. The artist may revel unchecked in themes, whether conventional, pictorial or decorative—figures, landscapes, marine and genre subjects, are all before her with liberty of choice.

Fringed oblongs of silk or satin, embroidered in silk with sprays of flowers, have loose stitches holding in place a small gilt-edged slip of pasteboard containing the guest's name.

Small envelopes, the stamp in one corner represented by a flower, have a postmark suggesting the name of the flower and the date of its blossoming ; as, for example—arbutus, April 15th. One of these envelopes is addressed to each of the gentlemen of a dinner company and delivered to him as he arrives ; it contains a card with the name of the lady he is to conduct to the table.

A menu card, with gilded edge and lettering, has in one corner a drawing of shelves bearing platters of old blue

and jugs and vases delicately tinted with color and touched with gold.

A quaint fancy was a series of designs for dinner cards for Thanksgiving or Christmas, cut from fine card-board, dexterously painted in water-color, then secured with gum to the corner of a narrow card with gilt edges intended for the name. These included designs of a turkey, game, fish, champagne, celery, etc.

For minute brush-work, illuminated manuscripts will be found rich in suggestion. Those done in the fifteenth century in Italy, the Low Countries and France are full of exquisite studies from nature, enamelling borders in dull gold. Every imaginable flower appears there in glowing hues with gold-winged butterflies and glittering insects. They have been called manuscript miniatures, resembling stained glass transferred to vellum—"cartons à vitraux." A year or two ago the unique illuminated MS. of an ancient love-song—the Romaunt of the Rose—strayed into a New York auction-room. The miniature paintings of inconceivable delicacy, strewn over a ground of blue and gold, are attributed to the brush of a special artist employed by Charles IX., and the price paid for this treasure by the American purchaser was $1,900.

The vignettes and borders done by Miss McIlvaine are a close approach to old missal work. One of the prize designs for a Christmas card from the hand of Miss Anne G. Morse, in the first Prang competition, is entirely in keeping with this class of decoration. The ivy-leaf border, the kneeling children holding mistletoe and holly boughs, the flat tints laid on a dead gold ground and outlined with black, are capitally done. The broad, artistic treatment of decorative illumination at Miss Emmet's hands, shown in her

widely known Christmas cards, is an excellent study for the beginner; the same may be said of the beautiful raised border of Miss Wheeler's prize design of choiring angels.

Visit the mass-books, the skeleton prints and early illuminations, at the Metropolitan Museum. From them you will gain a number of ideas, as also from the "Art of Illuminating" by Tymms and Wyatt. Do not forget that this work demands absolute accuracy in drawing the design.

No mention of menus and dinner cards in New York would be complete without allusion to those of Mr. James Whitehouse. They, however, have been carried out of the region of amateur work.

The specimens elicited by the prize competitions of the *Art Interchange* have showed much that was commendable in conception and in treatment.

Etching with Pen and Ink upon Linen.

Drawing, with a pen and indelible ink, upon linen or satin jean, is a pleasant occupation. There are various articles of household use and ornament to which it may properly be applied; but dessert doyleys are most often taken to experiment upon. These should be about eight inches square, or else shaped upon the inner circle of a dessert plate. In using linen, a prepared surface is best to work upon, for which the usual preparation of gum is employed; it is then left to dry, and pressed with a moderately hot iron. When this is done, secure a perfectly smooth surface by fastening the linen with drawing-pins upon a

board. Sketch or transfer the design, leaving all expression or shading to the pen.

For general work, Harrison & Bradford's No. 170 pen is recommended; and, for fine lines, Gillott's mapping pen, No. 291. Quill pens are sometimes used; also Scofield's Crystal Marking Pen, which dispenses with a stiffening preparation on the cloth.

Any good indelible ink will serve one's purpose; but the Society of Decorative Art has furnished an ink, manufactured especially for this work, together with pens, preparation, etc. The bottle containing the ink should be well shaken before using, as well as from time to time while in use, to insure a fluid state.

Draw, as with India ink on Bristol board, taking care to keep the ink on the surface of the linen. Never bear so hard upon the pen as to press it in. Broad lines are made by several light strokes of the pen, not by one heavy stroke. Shading should be light and open. When the drawing is finished, expose it to sunlight for several hours, this will insure a good and lasting color and deepen the shadows.

Japanese sketches; comical "situations," taken from *Punch*, for instance; subjects from "Baby Days," *St. Nicholas*, Kingsley's "Water-babies," "Alice in Wonderland," the "Reineke Fuchs"—or from any of a hundred other sources—are suited for this work. Hunting-scenes and mishaps have been made very amusing. The doyley appears at that stage of a dinner party, when a little fun is relished heartily. When original sketches are possible, these drawings offer an excellent field for design.

In using satin jean, be careful to etch across the grain of the material, or a speedy and woful spluttering of the pen will destroy all your labor.

Small doyleys of this kind are generally fringed by ravelling out the stuff. A line of hem stitching or drawn-work is sometimes added to the square.

Panel Painting.

For decorative panels, choose old or thoroughly seasoned wood. Mahogany, cedar, oak, pear, holly, chestnut and highly polished pine, have been used for this purpose. The background may be painted, gilded or left in the natural tint of the wood. Medium sized red sable brushes —a broader bristle brush for backgrounds—a hand-rest and the ordinary tube oil-colors, are the requisites of this craft. Bearing in mind that a panel is not a picture but only a part of the general decoration of the room, it should above all harmonize and blend with its surroundings, without attempting to take front rank by the display of conspicuous design or color. Most popular for panel painting are flower subjects, such as mullein or foxglove in a single stalk; almond or peach blossom on a drooping bough; long errant vines, of purple passion flower or trumpet creeper; and roses or chrysanthemums massed in rich profusion. For background are used effects of softly mottled gray, blue or green, warmed with other colors, and dashed here and there with white. In drawing flowers, we are inclined to recall to you Alfieri's preference, "originale anche tristo a ottima copia;" but when figures are attempted, let them be copies of any good original, unless you are sure of at least anatomical correctness in the outline. It is full time that the dislocated nymphs who cling dejectedly to peacocks or to orange-trees, or those who wave lilies aimlessly in the air, should be relegated to the school of Mr.

Jellaby Postlethwaite and his fellows. Landscape panels for choice cabinets have been painted by some of our artists; and both here and in England, decorative panels touched by the brush of acknowledged masters find their way to the exhibitions, thence to the walls of favored drawing-rooms.

Wall-panels of conspicuous merit recently painted by Mr. Charles Caryl Coleman, and others by Mr. Francis Lathrop, have been welcomed by the followers of Decorative Art in America as a gratifying recognition from pictorial artists of the possibilities it affords. The exquisite manipulation bestowed by Mr. Coleman upon his taking groups of thorn-trees, textiles, musical instruments, porcelain jars, brass plaques and mosaic windows, and Mr. Lathrop's well-composed, well-grouped figures, recalling those seen on old tapestries, fulfil the decorative purpose admirably.

Painting on Wood with Water-colors.

When the beginner desires to try a "'prentice hand" upon wood with water-colors, it is suggested to use a piece of white chestnut in its natural state, upon which the design is first drawn with a pencil or transferred. The wood should then be thoroughly cleaned with bread-crumb, leaving a spotless surface on which to lay the color. The water-colors are mixed with Chinese white, which renders them opaque. In beginning with the dark shades, we here reverse the usual order employed by the painter with transparent color, and ascend the scale from deepest shadow to highest light. When the painting is finished, it may be brought to a high lustre by applying a coat of patent white size over the whole surface of the object decorated; then

allowing it to dry, repeat the operation. After the second coat is laid on and dried, white spirit varnish is applied with a large soft brush, working it first from top to bottom; and, when this dries, another coating is worked from side to side. This process goes on until the desired polish is obtained. Many small objects, such as work-boxes, jewel-cases, glove-boxes, palettes and panels, may be suitably decorated in this way.

Hand-painted Tables.

Small tables made of cherry, with a veneer of holly on top, have been charmingly decorated in oils or in water-colors, and the surface afterward ebonized. For a round table, a conventionalized design radiating from the centre looks well; though a half-garland, or a spray of flowers and foliage dropped upon the side, may be preferred. Some of the curiosity-shops display quaint tables, oblong or diamond shaped and with folding leaves, belonging to the Georgian era and decorated with painted wreaths and posies of softly brilliant hues, which, at first sight, appear to be specimens of the most elaborate inlaid work. This attractive method of applying ornament has been of late revived among drawing-room industries.

PART III.

MODERN HOMES.

"Who creates a home;
Creates a potent spirit, which, in turn,
Doth fashion him that fashioned."

MODERN HOMES.

MOST people of moderate means, after consulting some of the recent sumptuous works on decorative household art, have experienced, upon laying them down, a moment of depression akin to that of the cook who, tradition says, read in her receipt book "First, catch your hare." "What results," they urge, "are not possible to those who can put their hands upon material at command? What exasperating uncertainties attend an experiment with short lengths, cheap stuffs, scant allowance, while striving for an artistic 'effect' recommended by one of these relentless manuals?"

And yet, the work goes on! Everywhere throughout our broad land there is a stir, a chirping, a meeting together as of birds in early spring-time, while feminine schemes are projected for the embellishment of home. As every sensible head of a family must know, life is not worth living in rebellion against an edict from the power behind the throne, ordaining rehabilitation of the theatre of daily life. The whole mechanism of Society and all the forces of Nature exact changes. When the general law of the universe thus combines with the special law of the household, what remains for hapless man but unqualified submission? He takes his seat, perchance, in one of the well-worn chairs of reps or haircloth whose scars and wrinkles betray its honor-

able service—he looks about him pensively at the familiar faded objects—the florid mirror-frames, the rosewood furniture with marble tops, the many-flowered brocatelle, the fern-leaf pattern on the wall-paper—he feebly ventures to ask why these things won't "do!" For a long time he has thought them "very nice!"

It is all in vain. The ladies lose no time in putting themselves under the yoke of one of those delightful modern institutions, an advisory artist—and a season of untold discomfort ensues, when life is like one prolonged first of May; when the painter with his pots, the paper-hanger with his paste, the carpenter with his tools, revel unrebuked amid the scattered household gods. They vanish reluctantly at last, leaving quiet and—the bills!

The bills—aye, there's the rub, to many of us! But we seriously doubt the superior charm, in the eyes of most of our sisters, of the method of home renovation just described. Ask the richest woman of your acquaintance—if, as in the case of most Americans, her fortune has come to, not with, her—to recall the days of "contriving" in her life, and see if the remembrance does not bring a warmth into her cheek, a light into her eye, that no present bounties lavished by the blind Goddess ever succeed in kindling there. How tenderly is this expressed by the musings of Elia's "Cousin Bridget!"

"'I wish the good old times would come again,' she said, 'when we were not quite so rich. I do not mean that I want to be poor; but there was a middle state'—so she was pleased to ramble on,—'in which I am sure we were a great deal happier. A purchase is but a purchase, now that you have money enough and to spare. Formerly, it used to be a triumph. When we coveted a cheap luxury, we were used

to have a debate two or three days before, and to weigh the *for* and *against*, and think what we might spare it out of, and what saving we could hit upon, that should be an equivalent. A thing was worth buying then, 'when we felt the money that we paid for it.'"

We will suppose a young couple to be setting forth upon that beatified pathway, the first housekeeping. To the bride, there are many objects, familiar from childhood beneath the paternal roof-tree, that here assume an entirely new aspect. Stores of house linen and table napery, hitherto vaguely commonplace, are laid with caressing fingers upon their shelves; mattresses, pillows and bolsters receive a friendly pat in passing; china and glass seem too pretty to be touched; pots, pans and skewers have a glorified glitter; the front-door mat is incredibly interesting; coal-cellar, gas-meter and furnace, until now dimly comprehended, rise to be subjects of daily talk and profound consideration.

This is the true beginning. No woman, whatever her estate in life, can attain a right and thorough enjoyment of the æsthetics of home decoration, unless she has previously established for that home a foundation of method and of order, by continued personal supervision in every department both above and below stairs.

Next comes the all-important question of decoration. "If you wish me to write upon a slate, give it to me clean," said the old music master in "Consuelo," when refusing scholars who had been previously trained elsewhere. This can by no possibility be claimed for the subject of household decorative art. The slate has been written and rewritten, and to a conscientious community like ours, that knows its Clarence Cook, there is little new to say!

It is therefore purposed only to supplement here the

methods of Woman's Handiwork set forth in Parts I. and II., by a few practical hints as to objects that may be appropriately assembled with the results of brush and needle—together with a glance at those essentially feminine interests —the adornment of tables for dinner or for afternoon tea.

First, let us say that most of the following suggestions are meant for people who desire to make a limited sum accomplish as much as is possible in adding beauty and comfort to their homes. For those who can afford not to count the cost of decorations, there are professional counsellors by the score.

The first consideration, upon taking possession of new quarters, is the paper-hanging. From Dr. Dresser's "Principles of Design," we cull this bit of wisdom. "All walls, however decorated, should serve as a background to whatever stands in front of them. . . . As to color, the best wall-papers are those which consist of somewhat strong color in very small masses—masses so small that the general effect of the paper is rich, low-toned and neutral, and yet has a glowing color-bloom." Paper-hangings are now to be had in such infinite variety, that the only difficulty is what to choose. Those sent from well-known manufacturers in England are marked by refined tones of color laid flat upon conventionalized designs, and by the sparing introduction of dull gold into the background. Those of Dresser and of Morris, are familiar in our houses. Owen Jones' designs are chiefly small berries, fruit, hips and haws, etc., with flowers and foliage, simple and unpretending, yet most attractive to the eye. A new English artist sends Renaissance designs of graceful festoons, with fruit and flowers.

American taste, hitherto inclining toward heavy color

and intense gilding, as still seen in some restaurants and concert-halls, has during the last two years taken a long stride forward in the matter of paperings. The designs made by leading artists have produced hangings beautiful enough to make us quite independent of foreign importations. Among them is a drawing-room paper, French in style, representing antique damask. This has a ground of ivory tint, with conventional flowers of a warmer shade of ivory, having an effect as of velvet in low relief against threads of dull gold in the woof of a tissue. With it, is used for the ceiling a very pale shade of blue, sprinkled with gold. A black wood with gold moulding should edge the frieze made to match this paper.

Another has bronze and copper effects on a pale olive background ; with this is used a frieze introducing Indian-red. The rich red of rust-color is mingled with burnished silver upon neutral tinted grounds ; and papers in faintly perceptible shades of gray or blue or green have Japanese designs of flying storks, or geometrical patterns in dull gold. Some of these hangings cost not more than seventy-five cents a roll ; and any one of them would be suitable in a sitting-room where water-colors or engravings form the decoration of the walls.

For library and dining-room, deeper tones of olive, sage, Indian-red and Antwerp blue, with lines and touches of dull gold, are provided.

For the hall, a new idea is what is called, in the trade, the "English Japanese."

Cheap papers for bed-rooms and sitting-room, for from twenty-five to thirty cents a roll, are extremely pretty, and may be had in cream, amber, fawn, rose, blue and pale olive, with traceries of soft, contrasted hues. The designs

include passion-flowers, honeysuckle, wild roses, blackberries, crow's-foot, oak-leaves and acorns, etc.—together with many good geometrical patterns. The French chintz papers are brilliant, but never gaudy. Their place is in a bedroom set aside for casual guests, where there should be added beautiful modern cretonnes for curtains and for the drapery to hang over a brass bed, to secure a very bower of brightness.

Where bookcases run around the wall—a charming fashion much followed lately in what are called our living-rooms—the surface above may be washed with Indian or Pompeian red, and a light stencil effect in dull gold made to supply the place of a frieze.

The floors are next to be considered. In most modern houses and in "flats," these are laid in narrow pine boards, and may be stained all over or around the edge with brown, warmed with red. This, when covered with a good coat of shellac, will keep its looks for a long time, if the maid-servant goes over it once a week with a little milk or with linseed-oil and water, using a hair-brush for ordinary dusting purposes.

Oriental rugs are so generally used, and have been bought so cheap at recent sales, that almost every home contains one or more of them; but some of the "American Smyrna" or "Merzapore" rugs, recently made in Philadelphia, are as admirable in color and design—and they are sold at a smaller price, have the additional advantage of being reversible, and are expected to wear as well.

In a room destined for common family use, experience has proved that nothing wears more satisfactorily than a square of body-Brussels carpeting, in small, blended geometrical patterns of blue and crimson, green and brown.

This illustrates in color Dr. Dresser's favorite effect of "neutral bloom."

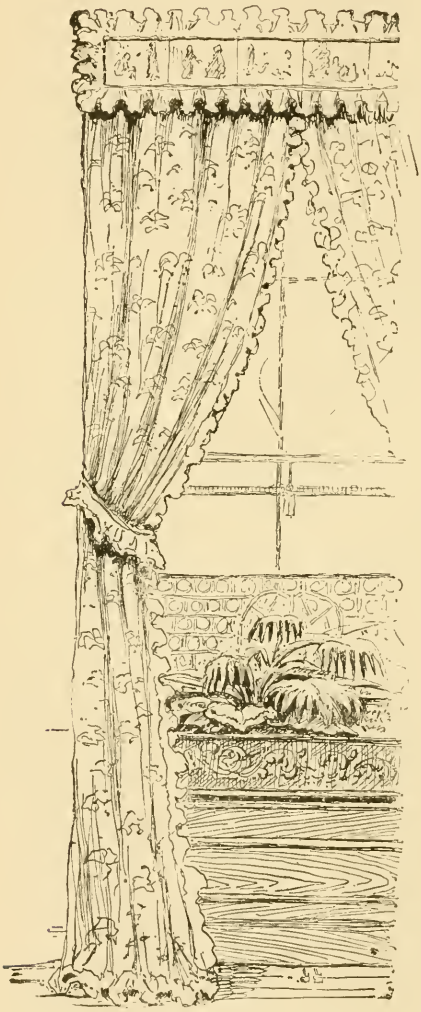
Ingrain "filling" and "wool Dutch," in plain, rich shades, are much employed to cover the middle of stained floors. Three-ply and ingrain carpets in Morris patterns are pretty enough to show themselves in any company. A Kelim rug, of about the same thickness as ingrain carpeting, may be bought at a reasonable price in a large size, to lay before the fire.

Old marble mantel-pieces have been painted with two or three coats of oil-color, to match the prevailing tint in the room; when rubbed down, they look very well. Brown, slate-gray, Venetian-red and ebony-black are the colors generally used for this purpose. Directions for adorning the mantel-piece are given farther on.

Book-shelves, brackets, corner-shelves, over-mantels, and racks for china to nail above the doors, have been made of pine, painted in flat color or stained and shellacked, with excellent effect. The shelves should be finished with a band of pinked leather. Maroon leather thus used, with traceries of gilt, can be secured with nail-heads punched in geometrical patterns to imitate those used in antique furniture.

Furniture need never be bought "en suite," as it is called. If you can do no better, begin with a box-lounge and ample cushions covered with chintz; a cheap table, whose deficiencies are hidden by a flowing drapery of raw silk stamped in Eastern patterns; one or two comfortable easy-chairs (for there is no economy in poor chairs) and a few lighter ones; book-shelves; a scattering of inexpensive but firmly-set little tables, to contain the wedding presents; chintz curtains parting over a jardinière full of palms and hardy ferns; a davenport that may, by-and-by, in company

with the lounge and chairs, ascend into bedroom regions; a piano, we hope, and books and drawing materials; to these add your bits of woman's handiwork—ah! what a pretty, bright, heartsome room this will make, if it is lived in constantly! There is no mistake more commonly made by young housekeepers, none more sure to be regretted, than trying to buy all at once.



"Chintz Curtains, parting over a Jardinière."

The dining-room should be furnished in rich colors. If you have little money to spend on it at first, get a table and six chairs, with a set of shelves for china and silver, and a side-table; you can dispense with the side-board until some day you come upon a beauty in old mahogany, with brass rails and lustrous panels. The purchase of a large, substantial and handsome dining-table

is one never repented of. Those made in mahogany or cherry are just now most in demand.

The bedrooms can be made attractive with comparatively small outlay. Enamelled "cottage sets," when not too florid in ornament, are good; and there are now to be had in New York sets of bedroom furniture made after the designs of Mr. McKim, in oak, ash, cherry, mahogany and cotton-wood, at prices varying from $55 to $100 each, so light and graceful yet substantial, as to be, in common parlance, "exactly what one wants." A number of these sets have been made for the Casino at Newport, and for country-houses there and elsewhere.

Where an increased outlay is allowable, there is lovely Queen Anne furniture, successor to the more ponderous "Eastlake," in our shops. This is generally made of mahogany, cherry, walnut or ebonized cherry-wood, in light, elegant shapes, well put together, with many panels, carved balustrades to finish tops and edges, and bevelled glass agleam in doors of press or cabinet. Chippendale tables and hanging shelves, made after the charming old patterns, are sold at reasonable prices. They should be even more freely domesticated among us, now that an enterprising art dealer here is prepared to supply them upon orders—having secured volumes containing complete sets of the published sketches and working-drawings of Chippendale, Sheraton and the brothers Adams, the famous cabinet-makers, whose renown has recently flamed up with the brilliancy it attained in generations past. Old pieces of this work, almost as perfect now as when they left the shop, fetch what the dealers choose to ask for them. Look at the elbow tea-tables, with fragile carved rims to hold the egg-shell cups in place; the chairs with

strong yet graceful frames and low, broad seats; the oval or square mahogany cabinets, with lines of marquetry in satin-wood, standing on slender, firm-set legs, having velvet-covered shelves behind small bevelled panes of glass, inviting you to enshrine there the rarities of your collections! Do not such as these consort well with the repoussé tea-caddy, the fan of carved tortoise-shell, the miniatures set in pearl or garnets, the enamelled snuff-box, the chain of cameos, the apostle-spoons, the missal-clasps, the Augsburg box, the mourning rings, the old French taper-stand, the fine translucent porcelain of your hoards?

Then there are chairs and settles of Yorkshire oak, fitted with movable cushions of plush; carved dower-chests from Spain and Italy; tall Dutch and French clocks to stand sentry over them in the hall; embroidered mirror-frames of old English work; sconces of beaten brass or Venice glass; donkey-bags of the East converted into luxurious drawing-room fauteuils; cabinets of ruddy Boule, and pieces of Holland marquetry of the time of William and Mary, broad and bandy-legged, inlaid with tulips, birds and flowers; old English tables with folding leaves, painted in oils with bloomy garlands that time has only mellowed; Louis Seize mahogany and brass; and wondrous traceries of Indian teak—these are some of the favorites of modern fashion!

A delightful fancy is that of rooms fitted up in what we call "Old Colony" style, like those recently designed by Mr. William Bigelow. All the wood-work is in enamelled white, having high wainscots and partly panelled walls with stucco wreaths and decorations. The door-frames are low, the mantel-shelves high in proportion. Nor are there lacking corner cupboards—

"Piled with a dapper Dresden world,
Beaux, beauties, prayers and poses,
Bronzes with squat legs undercurled,
And great jars filled with roses."

Hearths and fireplaces are of polished red brick, for use with urn-shaped fire-dogs and glittering brasses. The hard-wood floors are stained dark, with Turkey rugs; and the furniture is made square and stiff, of white enamelled wood, with many cushions of chintz in old-time dyes. Curtains of chintz are run on brass rods across broad window-seats, inviting cosy chat. From the fireside the spinning-wheel should not be absent, nor yet the split-bottomed sewing-chair, brass candlesticks, or the duster made of a turkey's tail! Such are the coquetries of Fashion, masquerading in her grandmother's gown and kerchief!

A word about furniture coverings. Beginning at the foot of the list, there are jutes and cretonnes without number, followed by a wide range of raw-silk stuffs—beautiful and tempting, but liable, from the nature of the surface, to soil before they are half worn. Stamped velveteen and plain or stamped worsted plushes, in shades of Indian-red, old gold, dark blue, sage or olive green, harmonize with any of the varieties of furniture just now in vogue, and wear admirably. Modern taste inclines strongly to stamped and gilded leather for wall-hangings, chair and sofa covers, and for dining-room or hall screens. A few steps out of Broadway, on Eighteenth Street, is to be found a manufactory where this art of decorating leather is carried as near to perfection as anything we are likely to see, after the rare old Venetian leathers made to imitate Eastern brocades, the splendid Flemish, Dutch or Lyons hangings of the time of

Louis XIII., and those of the eighteenth century in France, for which such decorators as Oppenard and the Meissoniers made the designs. The maker of our New York "Cordovan" leathers, artist and artisan at once, employs, for his surfaces pressed into low relief, tints of fiery copper, resplendent blue, the golden lustre of Moorish pottery and a melting pomegranate, so blent as to produce an effect of clouds at sunset.

As praiseworthy are the embossed silk plushes originating in the same atelier. In these, patterns stamped upon the mossy pile are dyed in tones of color to delight the eye of an "impressionist." One of them, called by the maker his Monticelli, reproduces the brilliant effects in a woodland revel from that master's brush. Another, bathed in golden light, might as fitly be termed a Cuyp. Still another, dyed in blues and greens, suggests the celebrated peacock room done by Whistler for Mr. Leyland's house.

The use of windows or screens of mosaic glass has become, in the hands of two of our American artists, Mr. Tiffany and Mr. Lafarge, an all-important element of artistic furnishing. This is not by any means to be confounded with the painted panes seen in many of our church windows, but is a return to the archaic glass of early cathedral decoration in Europe. The bold and brilliant treatment by which geometrical bits of varying thickness are chipped from sheets of vivid emerald, of pigeon's blood ruby, of cloudy agate or of sensitive opal, and, together with bull's eyes of sheet-glass and many-faceted blocks of rough crystal, fitted in place like the pieces of a dissected map, held secure by a ribbon of lead often gilded to emphasize its presence, makes the old work with brush and pigment pale into insignificance. One of the loveliest of Mr. Tiffany's con-

tinually varying effects is gained from opaline glass, with a corrugated surface "like wrinkled skins on scalded milk." To see this in mosaic, relieved by sudden bursts of fiery radiance shot through bosses of sapphire, garnet, emerald, amethyst and topaz, is like no experience more recent than that of Aladdin in the cave of the African Magician!

Sometimes, upon a milky way of glass are sprinkled bits of splintered gems, like the millefiori of ancient Venice; again, the surface shines with a subtle infusion of gold and amber; next, a sheet of clear aqua marina has odd traceries etched upon it by acids. Fancy all these thrown together by the artist's inspiration of a moment, in designs of fruit, of flowers, of drapery, of clouds, of landscapes—if beautiful at night when lighted from within, what are they when changing in tone with the changing day, and at evening set afire by the level rays of westering sunshine?

Before leaving the subject of furniture in interior decoration, there is an important branch of Woman's handiwork in America, by no means to be overlooked.

The wood-carving industries of Cincinnati have, during the last few years, attained a degree of excellence suggesting the revival of this beautiful art at the end of the seventeenth century, in England, when the great master, Grinling Gibbons, or his contemporaries, Young, Davies, Lobb and Watson, executed work, notably at Petworth and at Chatsworth, which has remained a splendid witness to their skill. Flowers, garlands, branches, fruit, cornucopiæ, corn, game, crabs, lobsters, shells, fish, nets, festoons, etc., were cut in exact imitation of nature, and applied to walls, ceilings and furniture. So much was the "conventional" in art set aside by the school of Grinling Gibbons, that we find in the

epitaph of one of the famous carvers of Chatsworth, this boast:

> "Watson is gone, whose skilful art display'd
> To the very life whatever Nature made."

The masterpiece usually attributed to Grinling Gibbons, and which Horace Walpole asserts to have been a gift of that artist to the Duke of Devonshire, upon completing his work at Chatsworth (though there is no proof that Gibbons was ever there), will be recalled by visitors to that palace. This is a panel displaying a realistic group, consisting of a woodcock, some foliage, a medallion with a man's bust in relief, and a marvellously carved cravat of old point lace as delicate in texture as the original web—all seemingly hung together as if from a peg in the wall. And in some of the work done by women trained in the Cincinnati schools of carving, is seen an expression of the facts and forms of nature, that could only come from a study of nature and a love of it for its own sake. It is there held that, while restricted positions and lines of ornament must necessarily be treated conventionally, panels may show decoration, either in relief or color, as natural and realistic as they have skill to make it.

The wood-carving class of the Cincinnati School of Design, established in 1873 by Mr. Benn Pitman, assisted by his accomplished daughter, Miss Agnes Pitman, is fortunate in receiving from them teachings both artistic and original. About one hundred pupils, most of them women from the educated class of society, have demonstrated the fact that ladies of independent position can be inspired with such love of their art as, in time, to design and produce carving superior in conception to, and of as good

technical execution as, that done by trained professional workmen. The aim of most of these ladies has been the decoration of their own homes, and the result has shown many specimens of advanced art-work, full of poetic beauty, but always keeping in view the position the objects decorated are to occupy and the uses to which they will be put. Mantel-pieces and over-mantels, delicately carved with conventional traceries and supported by brackets boldly cut as much as five inches in relief; bedsteads, bookcases, cabinets, screens, panels and base-boards, carved from solid mahogany, cherry, oak or walnut, are decorated with an inexhaustible variety of wild flowers, climbing vines, animal and artificial forms. Mr. Pitman has established for his pupils certain laws of decoration—including the law of *repetition* (of leaf, bud and blossom, etc.); of *alternation* (leaf and bud, leaf and blossom, blossom and bud, etc.); of *enclosure* in lines, bands and geometrical forms; of *radiation* (lines, sprays, elements of decoration radiating from a given centre); laws regulating all-over patterns or diaper patterns for surfaces; and the law of panel treatment for a higher type of decoration. In this school, good and appropriate construction of the article adorned is ranked as of great importance; and all the pieces decorated by his pupils are made under the master's eye, from his designs and by his own workmen.

From the Carving School of the Messrs. Fry and Miss Fry (father, son and granddaughter), where three generations of talent are united for the guidance of their pupils, Cincinnati sent the ornamental wood-carvings which received the medal and diploma awarded in the Woman's Pavilion at the Centennial Exhibition. Thence trained teachers and experts have been scattered into all parts of the coun-

try, as well as students who have acquired the art as an accomplishment merely, for use at home. The exaction made of all young women desiring to enter the field of decorative art, under Miss Fry's skilled supervision, is that they shall be thoroughly earnest in attention to drawing. This she considers the best initial culture for the eye and the hand; next she instructs them in modelling in clay, as the best lesson in creative work; afterwards, if desired, the pupil is taught sculpture in wood or marble.

Some time after the great Music Hall of Cincinnati was erected, it was suggested that the decoration of the organ-screen might be appropriately given to women who had studied in either of the schools mentioned. Prizes were offered by Mr. Reuben Springer, for the best designs and best work in wood-carving. Among seven pupils competing from the Carving School, six prizes were awarded—Miss Laura Ann Fry taking the first prize of one hundred dollars in gold, given in a silver purse, for designing and carving a group of lilies on the Mendelssohn panel. An exquisite carving of locust-blossoms and foliage, done by Miss Julia Rice, received another prize.

Other beautiful pieces, among them the Scarlati and Glück panels, were executed by pupils of the School of Design.

The result is an organ-screen carved mainly by women-amateurs, exhibiting not only the cultivated delicacy of touch one would look for in work from such hands, but an admirable freedom in undercutting, hitherto unsurpassed in America.

Tea-Screen, designed

Miss Dora Wheeler.

SCREENS.

SCREENS, at first nothing more than the skins of animals hung upon rude frame-work, were, in the vast, draughty halls of mediæval castles, indispensable to comfort. They served also to divide the sleeping-places of the family from a living-room common to lord and lady, maidens, vassals and guests. Screens of plaited osier, to stand before mighty fires, were followed by those draped with stuffs, just as rush-strewn floors gave place to woven coverings. But this was chiefly for the chambers of royal palaces—screens, then as now, being *objets de luxe* in the literal sense.

Later, came screens of carved wood, of arras or embroidery, of brass or bronze. Visitors to the sales of the rue Drouot, in Paris, are sometimes rewarded by coming upon a stately screen of tapestry made precious by age, the panels secured by quaint nail-heads beaten into the likeness of Renaissance grotesques. These, and the iridescent screens of stamped and gilded leather, imitating the old Spanish guadameciles, seem most beautiful of them all, even in a land where the screen has always been made an especial object in household decoration. French embroiderers borrow, for their screen-panels, forms illustrating every period of art—from the classic groups and acanthus borders of Greece, to the exuberant fancies of the Renaissance. Louis Quinze screens of satin, embroidered in chenille with flowers, curves, ciphers, allegories, shells and

rock-work, and framed in gilded wood, are an epitome of the history of a luxurious reign; as the famous carved oak screens of ancestral English homes, and the shield-shaped "Chippendales" enclosing faded needlework under glass, tell the story of their respective periods. To run upon one of the latter prim little specimens of bygone gentility, in a New York curiosity-shop, sets one dreaming of a society peopled with men in powdered wigs, and dames in caps and lappets.

In the Hôtel de Cluny is a screen of pure gold, the gift of an emperor of Germany to the Cathedral of Basle.

Many old castles and country-houses of England contain beautiful screens in tapestry or needlework. At Hardwick Hall are some of crimson velvet covered with patterns worked in silver wires.

That audacious beauty, Lady Teazle, has been handed down to fame associated with a screen; but it is with the use, not abuse, of this now fashionable article of furniture, we must deal at present.

From the writings of a sparkling Frenchwoman, than whom no one knew better the appropriate surroundings of feminine sovereignty, we take this suggestion:

"With a certain exercise of tact, one can easily transform a long, uninteresting parlor into a series of small boudoirs, full of charm. Scatter there easy-chairs, foot-stools, lounges strewn with pillows, work-stands, writing-tables, jardinières, screens—*indispensably* screens—and you will have a sort of society bazaar where delicious mysteries may be confidentially discussed."

Among the beautiful things wafted to our shores by favoring winds at the time of the Centennial Exhibition, came a number of Chinese and Japanese lacquered or silk

screens, followed by those designed and embroidered by the schools of art needlework in England. These were eagerly bought and distributed throughout the land; and now the dealers in such things find it difficult to keep up with the demand—for the Oriental specimens, especially. Japanese screens painted on thin silk, are in universal use, either to cut off the "descent to Avernus" of the lower stairs, to conceal the movements of domestic service at the butler's-pantry door communicating with the dining-room, or to set dark corners aglow with their brilliant figures, birds or flowers.

One of the decorations of Gérome's studio for photography is a large screen of golden lacquer, arranged with hangings of Arabian stuff over it that form a tent-shaped drapery to soften the light coming through glass roofing.

In these Eastern screens, variety constitutes the first element of beauty. Leaves following each other are curiously contrasted. Those marvellous Orientals seem to have an illimitable power of uniting disconnected subjects, drawn and colored with splendid dash and freedom, for household ornament. Evidently keen observers and devout students of Nature's types, they have carried to the highest pitch the adaptation of those types to conventional design. This is why a Japanese screen in the house is a liberal education to the follower of art-needlework. What Europe centuries ago conferred upon Japan, Japan is now paying back to all the world with interest.

Single-fold screens of Chinese embroidery, framed in carved black wood, fine of grain and brilliant in polish, reveal a variety of figures, many of them having a symbolical significance. Upon a background of creamy silk are richly embroidered scenes suggesting nightmare to the

bewildered observer. Fô's dog, the sacred horse, the dragon, that extraordinary monster the Fong Hoang, and the Mandarin duck, are represented in colors which have in themselves a special meaning to the Chinese decorator.

But in homes where screens of Eastern manufacture are already established, arises the need of others to stand between the fire and its worshippers—to half surround a couch —to hang like a banner from the mantel-shelf—for use in bed-rooms and dressing-rooms. Here come into play the talent and industry of the lady in whose hands are united all the little invisible wires that control the scenery and "stage setting" of a home-interior of the period. Specimens from the Royal School of Art-needlework, first shown in Philadelphia in 1876, have been since freely copied; and many others as beautiful have been originated by our own designers.

The range of materials from which to choose for working your screen in silk or crewels is very wide. Satin, silk, velvet, the English diagonal serge or "Morris cloth," and fine felting are the best fabrics for embroidery intended to last and to hand down through generations, like that found in all the museums and art-collections both here and in Europe. There is no economy in cheap material for good needlework. What is worth doing at all, is worth doing substantially. Next come crash, linen, sail-cloth, oatmeal-cloth, momie-cloth and Bolton sheeting, with their soft gray or *écru* back-grounds.

In screens which are surrounded by a set framework, and are meant to serve as pictures, more naturalistic treatment in design is allowable than in work for any other piece of furniture. As you neither tread upon it nor lean against it, you may have, for example, a vine of coral honeysuckle; a

Folding Screen, design

y Mr. George Gibson.

clump of annunciation lilies; or swamp-grasses, with arrow-heads and iris, or with our own American cardinal flower, leaping up amid them like a tongue of flame. Adapt the studies in your country sketch-book, and your satisfaction will be much more enduring than if you had bought your screen-panels, stamped and already begun, from some fashionable "fancy" shop. Mr. Gibson's design for a screen, in illustration of this chapter, should be worked in silk and crewel upon serge or sateen, or in outline upon gray linen. It may also be reproduced in water-colors, upon silk or linen.

Regarding color, it seems almost superfluous to say, in the present advanced state of culture on such points, that all tints adapted to indoor decoration should be subdued. Nature, when transferred to serge or linen, should suggest herself in wooing hints and whispers, rather than flaunt her raw color in our faces. Fortunately for the uninitiated, the crewel dyers take this responsibility upon themselves, and it would be hard to go far astray with a bundle of these lovely skeins upon your work-table.

In working upon satin it is customary to sew the material in a frame. Where a variety of the more intricate stitches are used, this is necessary. But for a simple design in outline or stem stitch, feather stitch, etc., upon serge or linen, the frame may be dispensed with. In all cases, another quotation from Mme. de Girardin will prove a useful hint: "It is only your idle worker who leaves her wools tangled, her work exposed to everybody's gaze. The true workwoman takes pains to cover and guard her embroidery in her absence, which speaks for itself; the genuinely industrious need not assume to be so!"

Clematis on Olive Satin.

A screen recently executed by the Society of Decorative Art to fill an order, is a marvel of the delicate embroidery these work-rooms are famous for. First and loveliest, upon a panel of heavy olive-tinted satin, is seen a loose waving garland of hedge-row clematis—the virgin's bower of New England woods—with its long, lithe branches, white flowers, and seed-vessels fringed with silvery filaments. This vine is worked in silks, as are the pink and cream blossoms of the fragrant climbing honeysuckle, on the next fold. The foliage of the honeysuckle, and that of a group of lemon-colored, rose and crimson hollyhocks on the third panel, are embroidered in shaded green crewels, relieving the fine silken texture of the flowers. The framework of this screen is of mahogany.

A Rice-Plantation in the Drawing-Room.

A screen exhibited in England, done in imitation of the Japanese, has six panels illustrating the methods of work employed on Japanese rice-plantations. Upon a panel of golden fawn satin is depicted the sowing of the seed. Next, upon a blue panel, appear the processes of cultivation; while on a purple background the harvest plenitude is displayed. A panel of cinnamon-brown has female figures engaged in gathering the bearded grain; and a white and a crimson panel, have, respectively, portrayals of threshing, winnowing and garnering the crop. Each leaf is bordered by an edge of red Japanese brocade, and is mounted in an ebonized frame with silver corners.

Egyptian Design Appliqué in Colored Satins.

A small fire-screen is made of olive satin, with an Egyptian tracery worked in olive filoselle entirely over the background. The head and shoulders of an Egyptian girl are ingeniously *appliqué* in ivory satin, the head-dress and drapery formed of other satins *appliqué*. To do this, the girl's head, face, etc., are first sketched upon the satin and worked in split stitch with fine filoselle. They are then transferred to the background of olive satin, for which the exact space required has been previously secured by an outline of the sketch. The design on the body of the screen should be worked before the transfer is accomplished. The dress and ornaments are a mosaic of bright-colored bits, with a tiny bead or spangle added here and there.

Louis XVI. Fire-Screen in Ribbon Work.

A small fire-screen revives an old French fancy, more curious than pretty. On a ground of ivory satin is traced a design embodying some of the characteristic *bergeries* of the Louis XVI. period, graceful scrolls, arabesques, loops and garlands, worked in narrow ribbons of the now fashionable "*couleurs tuées*," meant to reproduce old-time tints. These ribbons come on spools, and are shaded like embroidery silks. The outlines of the design, stems, stalks, etc., are done in chain-stitch embroidery with silks, and some of the spaces are filled with French knots also worked in silk. The petals of the flowers, and their foliage, are made by drawing the ribbon through the satin ground and back again, the loop producing the desired effect. The result is as minute as shell-work.

Real Peacock's Feathers, in Appliqué.

This screen demands in execution an enormous outlay of patient pains. On a ground of fawn-colored sateen, a vase is standing upon a base worked with a few lines of gold and blue silk. The vase is cut from old-gold plush, and on it is worked a cloisonné pattern in blue, gold and crimson silks. It is then *appliquè* upon the sateen, with Japanese gold thread couching. From the vase spring a group of real peacock's feathers worked down with extreme delicacy of stitch. A branch of foliage, after the Japanese method, leans toward the vase on one side. Gold thread is freely used to complete the Japanese treatment of the design.

Drawing-Room Screen.

One of the beautiful screens exhibited in the early days of the Society of Decorative Art, was worked upon olive-tinted satin, in crewels, with such exquisite precision and delicacy of stitches as to be a wonder to beginners in art-needlework. Upon one panel arose the erect stalk and pale green velvet leaves of the mullein, with its cap of yellow buds. On the next, a trailing trumpet-vine ; and the third had a group of pink and crimson hollyhocks. The panels were framed in maroon plush.

Drawing-Room Fire-Screen.

Another noteworthy exhibit was a small triple-fold fire-screen framed in ebonized wood, with designs of peacock's feathers worked on old-gold silk, remarkable not only for the dainty manipulation of stitches, but because it was

originally drawn by one of the Vice-Presidents of the Society and, through her unwearied pains in instructing by letter alone, executed by a woman in humble circumstances living at a distance from New York, who was thus enabled to compete with the most accomplished among the Society's contributors. The letters of instruction and criticism upon work, always graciously given by the Society when requested, have been not least among their many successful efforts in "bringing forth good fruit" in the cause of Decorative Art.

Cretan Banner-Screen.

A pretty little banner-screen is made by cutting Cretan embroidery into strips, and inserting between them strips of black velvet embroidered in filoselle. A border of sapphire blue velvet serves as a frame, and is finished at the bottom by a fringe of combed crewels in tufts.

Chair-backs and tidies have been made in the same way.

Standing Fire-Screen.

Nasturtiums—orange, yellow, scarlet and maroon—are embroidered in silks upon a ground of slate-gray Pongee silk, and framed in cherry-wood.

Bats "Flying between the Cold Moon and the Earth."

A small banner-screen is suspended from fixtures of ebonized wood and gilt. Upon a ground of soft gray silk, streaked with Japanese touches of silver to represent the clouds, is a moon embroidered in fine white silk. Five fly-

ing bats, one of them crossing the moon's disk, are worked in shaded grays and black.

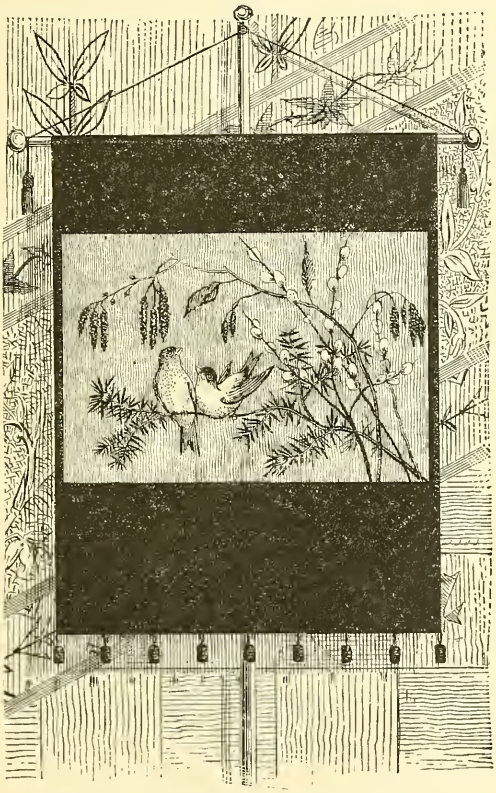
Tea-Screens.

The reign of kettledrums has brought into vogue many useful little contrivances for screening the tea-table and its votaries from the fire-glow. One of these is a light ebonized frame in two folds, about three feet high, something like a towel-horse, though narrower. Upon the top bar of each fold is hung a piece of *écru* pongee silk, with a fine design of Cretan embroidery outlined in gold, just long enough to protect the face, while the feet are left to enjoy the blaze. Any dainty piece of needlework might be utilized in this way, either hung loose like a towel, or nailed with ornamental tacks to the upper bar of the framework.

Miss Wheeler's design for a tea-screen, facing page 149, has, upon the panel entitled "Morning," a girl with outstretched arms, with tress of floating hair against a sunset sky above the water-line—a net held in her hands, a few birds flying overhead, daisies sprinkling the turf beneath her feet. This has been successfully adapted to a banner of gold or ivory satin, meant to hang upon the door or wall or beneath the shelf of a cabinet. When used as a two-fold screen, the companion panel, "Evening," accompanies it, as in our illustration.

A tiled tea-screen is elsewhere described, and at a late exhibition of the Royal School of Art-Needlework was shown a tea-cup screen, with embroidered panels, after designs from Mr. Walter Crane, illustrating the four senses —seeing, hearing, smelling and tasting. There are four

female figures worked on gray linen, in outlines of greenish brown silk : the first is holding a basket of daffodils ; the second has a shell to her ear, and is listening to the murmurs ; the third carries a rose, and inhales its perfume ; while the fourth is drinking from a shell. A new feature is the shelf for tea-cups, attached to this screen.



Banner-Screen, from the Society of Decorative Art.

PORTIÈRES.

FOR the origin and fitness of this now common substitute for the too prosaic door, we need look no farther back than the building of the Jewish Tabernacle, when "those that devised cunning work" had a special measure of "wisdom and understanding" given them from the Lord to "know how to work all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary." Among the heaped-up treasures, fashioned by those early decorative artists, Bezaleel and Aholiab, for the adornment of the Tabernacle—the ark and tables made of shittim wood, with cherubim of pure gold beaten out of one piece—the marvellous old candlesticks of beaten work, "made after the fashion of almonds in one branch, a knop and a flower"—the taches of gold, of silver and of brass—the brazen grate of network for the altar, and the seven lamps of pure gold—we find it recorded that they made "*an hanging for the tabernacle door*, of blue and purple and scarlet, and fine twined linen and needlework." A similar hanging for the gate of the court was made by Aholiab, the cunning embroiderer; and to set it up was the last touch laid upon the beautiful sanctuary. "So Moses finished the work."

There is something thoroughly Eastern in the conception of a portière. The stirring of its stately drapery seems to bring to the senses a waft from "far Cathay." Throughout all the glittering phantasmagoria of the Arabian Nights,

PORTIERE DESIGN,

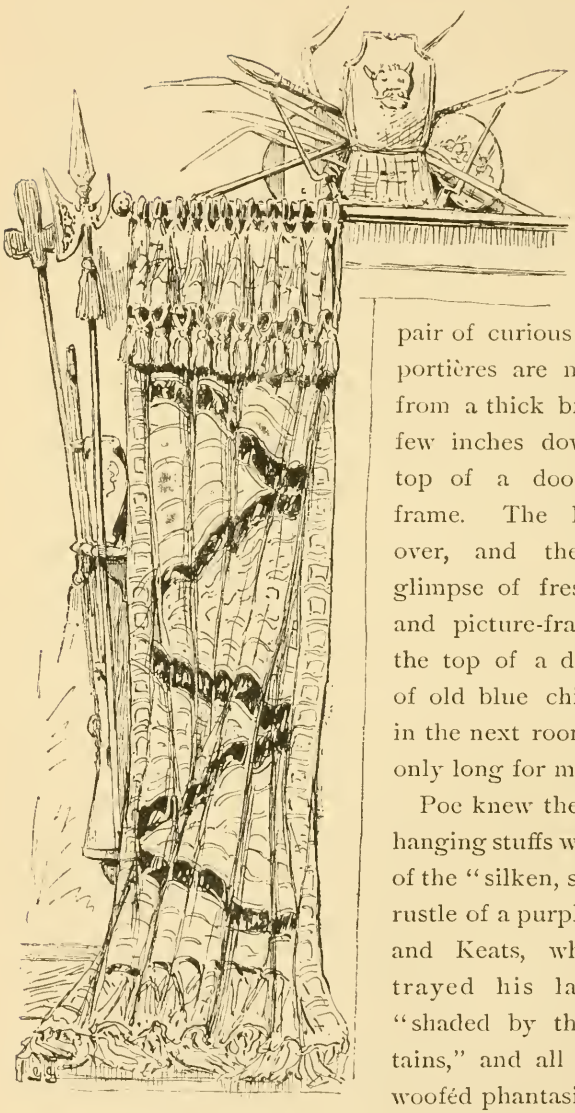
FROM WORKING DRAWING BY SAMUEL COLMAN

(REDUCED.)

this curtain plays an important part. Merry Haroun Alraschid watched the mad pranks of the merchant Abou Hassan, whom he had set upon his throne, through a golden lattice-door, hung with a "rich silk stuff, delicately embroidered with large flowers in various colors." Zobeide, wandering into the court of the petrified queen, passed through "a gate covered with plates of gold, the two folding-doors of which were open. A silk curtain hung before them, and behind it burned a hanging-lamp," etc., etc. Difficult as it would be for most of us to provide the house-fittings mentioned as accompanying the portières of the Arabian Nights, "columns of jasper with bases and capitals of purest gold," "urns of porphyry, and carpets of cloth of gold strewn with precious stones and musk and ambergris," there is no doubt of their picturesque effect in any home.

Compare for a moment the blank, inartistic monotony of our ordinary painted doors, particularly those between the two communicating rooms of the lower floor, with the flow of a piece of lovely stuff, chosen almost at hazard from the heaps that now pile the counters of the leading shops. French people have a peculiar right to dictate to us in portières, so long have these been associated with their dainty apartments, aristocratic hotels and stately chateaux. Therefore it is that their beautiful fabrics, woven in horizontal bars of subdued colors with a gold or silver thread running through the pattern, cannot fail to produce the effect desired. And to those who intend to make effects with their own fingers, these materials offer a number of useful suggestions in design.

The portière should not be looped back. There is nothing to gain by this method and all to lose, losing the straight natural flow of the stuff. A curtain hung upon rods with



Portière for Hall.

rings, as all well-regulated curtains now are, can be pulled back and forth at will, to exclude a draught or a pair of curious eyes. Many portières are made to hang from a thick brass rod set a few inches down from the top of a door, *inside* the frame. The light coming over, and the tantalizing glimpse of frescoing, frieze and picture-frames, and of the top of a door-shelf full of old blue china, perhaps, in the next room, makes one only long for more.

Poe knew the witchery of hanging stuffs when he wrote of the "silken, sad, uncertain rustle of a purple curtain"—and Keats, when he portrayed his lady's dream "shaded by the dusk curtains," and all "entoiled in woofèd phantasies."

A general rule that it may

be as well to state here, is that the portière should not repeat the curtains of a room. By so doing, you lose a great opportunity for telling colors. The tint of the drapery in the doorway may be more vivid if you choose, or less so, than that of the window-curtains. But be sure that the coloring is controlled by the other decorations of the room, with which it must accord.

With regard to the trimming of portières, after the deep band of plush or velvet, so commonly used, there should be very little additional ornament. The English laces, as they are called, a sort of satin galloon woven in charming figures, are much employed for trimming at the Kensington schools, and can be bought in New York.

A portière completed after Mr. Colman's design, as an experiment in the effect of oriental silks when subdued by contact with velvets and plushes in lower tones of color, is made of Japanese brocade, in shades of sapphire-blue, salmon-pink and gold, the leading tints reproduced in plush bands crossing it, the whole framed in a border of blue plush.

A great French artist has in one of his doorways, a superb Turkey carpet worked in silver, once used as a gondola carpet by a Venetian prince.

The portière here illustrated by Mr. Colman's sketch was designed by him for the Society of Decorative Art, and now belongs to Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt.

The upper space of this beautiful curtain is made of bands elaborated with the finest of exquisite needlework—such needlework as is only to be accomplished through hours of patient painstaking by skilled embroiderers, sitting statue-like at their frames. Upon light blue sateen appear reeds, iris flowers, lily-pads and other aquatic plants,

embroidered in low tones of blue, green and gray, and outlined in gold. A few lines of gold suggest cloud and landscape, sketched after the Japanese method. A narrower band below is of fawn-colored sateen, displaying a series of double disks cut with odd, irregular edges, traced in golden cord. These disks, made alternately of indescribably soft and silvery hues of rose-salmon and fawn plush, are wrought in silk and crewels with conventional designs, and are surrounded by a scroll-pattern worked with deep blue silk upon the fawn sateen. Above the blue space, a flight of birds, touched on the beaks with "livelier crimson," soar upward. Dividing the bands are strips of conventional marguerites done in gold thread. The body of the curtain is a lustrous mass of rose-salmon plush, bordered by a band of the silver fawn.

Single pieces of fine embroidery, Indian, Persian, Turkish or Chinese, are often used to hang within a doorway.

All of the lighter varieties of Eastern rugs have been used as portières, and Smyrna or Kelim draperies are well known in our homes.

Eastlake's suggestion of velvet, bordered and banded by embroidered horse-girths or by common coach-trimmings, has been adopted with success.

Turcoman portières have been imported here, and are much admired.

Tapestries, antique and modern, and tapestry-cloths woven in imitation of couched embroidery, the silk threads thrown to the surface and caught with cotton threads from the back, make suitable portières for a handsome room.

Velvets, plushes, sateen, raw silk fabrics, felting, momie-cloth, jutes and "Fashion drapery," are materials from which to choose portières.

Curtains of French make, stamped with patterns taken from Turkish or Smyrna rugs, are to be had in raw silk and cotton, at reasonable prices.

Coming into the region of embroidered portières, plush and velveteen are first recommended as a background for needlework. Diagonal serge, cloth or flannel are delightful fabrics to work upon. Tapestries in silk and cotton, many of them reproducing the hand-worked backgrounds of old Venetian embroidery, are very suggestive to a designer.

Satin should only be used in combination with plush or velvet for this purpose, the dado and borders of heavier material serving as a frame.

Among colors in which most of the stuffs mentioned may be had, are seal-brown, nut-brown and fawn; old gold, orange, maize, amber; garnet, wine color, pomegranate, Indian-red, crushed strawberry; peacock, turquoise, celestine, drake's neck, Damascus blue and robin's-egg blue; olive, sage, myrtle, jasper and résédas or mignonette green.

A portière of pale résédas serge bordered with brown velvet, has a deep dado of the same velvet, and is embroidered in crewels with reeds, grasses and pale-hued swamp-flowers, springing from the dado. So lightly and airily are these designs sketched, they seem to be swaying in the wind.

Another, of warm olive serge, has a bough of beech-leaves, the foliage shading from bronze to palest gold, embroidered in crewels and filoselle between bands of pomegranate plush.

Miss Elizabeth Glaister's ideas about portières thus decorated with perpendicular ornament, seem to us so valuable to needlewomen, that we transcribe them here.

"A dark blue curtain may have a pattern of oranges,

leaves and flowers worked in crewels. The orange being a good deal conventionalized in form already, by being made into an upright running pattern, and it being of more importance to make an harmonious decoration than a faithful portrait of the tree, the fruit must be conventionalized in color, into a golden brown or a dim yellow, with a green one here and there. The leaves must be a brownish green; two shades will be enough, the darker of which will serve also for the stems. The flowers must be put in sparingly in a very yellow white, and the yellow stamens and greenish buds should be made much of. The fruit must not be shaded, and the stitches should be upright in the middle, curving a little toward the top and bottom from the outside. Except in the case of an orange being seen endways, so that eye or stalk comes in the middle, when the stitches must be directed toward the centre, the shape of the fruit will sufficiently convey the idea of roundness.

"This will be a rich decoration, yet notice how few colors are needed for it; one shade of yellow-brown, three of green, with a little white and bright yellow, which may be in filoselles, are all that is needed. It is safe to assure you that a whole shopful of varied hues will not produce so good a decorative effect as these six, skilfully used in flat tints."

Sateen in light colors, or Bolton sheeting, looks best when the ground is entirely covered with a conventional pattern either in polychrome (*i.e.*, where many colors are employed harmoniously) or in monochrome, the decoration being of the same shade with the ground. Powdering, or sprinkling detached sprays over the surface, with a band of embroidery around the curtain, is another style. With cream sheeting or *écru* sateen, try a closely worked pattern in old-gold

filoselle shading to yellow, or in maroon shading to reddish pink, not forgetting the "boundary line" of embroidery or stitching, indispensable to branching designs of this nature.

Never commit the vulgar error of making your draperies too full or too long. They should be scant enough to display the design, and should touch, not trail upon, the floor.

Unbleached muslin sheeting has been lined with Turkey red, with dull blue or with orange, and trimmed with Madras ginghams; bands of colored canton flannel, disposed after the method of stripes in a Roman ribbon, are also used. Draperies of brown canton flannel, crossed with stripes made of gay bandanna pocket-handkerchiefs, have been made effective in a sea-side cottage room.

"Fashion drapery," the downy canton flannel alike on both sides, is among the economical materials for portières. Two or three shades may be successfully united by narrow lines of contrasting color, secured by herring-bone and *point russe* stitches in silk or crewel.

Jute and momie-cloth, felting and burlaps, are all good and inexpensive. A dark, coarse blue flannel, bought in a country-shop, in lieu of better material, was used for the dado of a portière in sage-green momie-cloth. Bulrushes, arrow-heads, ferns, grass and iris were sketched on the blue surface with tailor's chalk, and worked in long, feathery stitches in low-toned crewels. The effect, when finished, was astonishingly good.

Cashmere Shawls in Decoration.

Although it is popularly said that "a Cashmere shawl never goes out of fashion," it has been a long time since those who pretend to lead in matters of dress have allowed

them to appear unless in some costly wrap for which one of these lovely Oriental webs has been ruthlessly cut up. The headquarters of Cashmere shawls at Bombay continues to send them out, however, in all grades and qualities; and the striped ones, in price from $10 to $100, have been extensively used as curtains and portières. Firms in New York, and others in Boston, have sold large numbers of the cheaper kind for this purpose; and assuredly no one can go wrong in taste in employing them. Brass rings are sewn upon one end; and the drapery is suspended upon a rod of brass to flow free, or else to be looped back by cords made to match. Should the shawl be too long for door or window, one end can be turned over to form a sort of heading; and the rings can be sewn to a tape stitched on the shawl to prevent tearing. We suppose there are few enthusiastic amateurs in house-decoration who have not at some time been conscious of a mad ambition to employ some treasured round centre heirloom of a shawl in the guise of a table-cover, and have been reluctantly deterred from the project by qualms of conscientious reverence! Costly shawls have been utilized in this way more than once in New York, and in Paris they have even served to upholster chairs and couches.

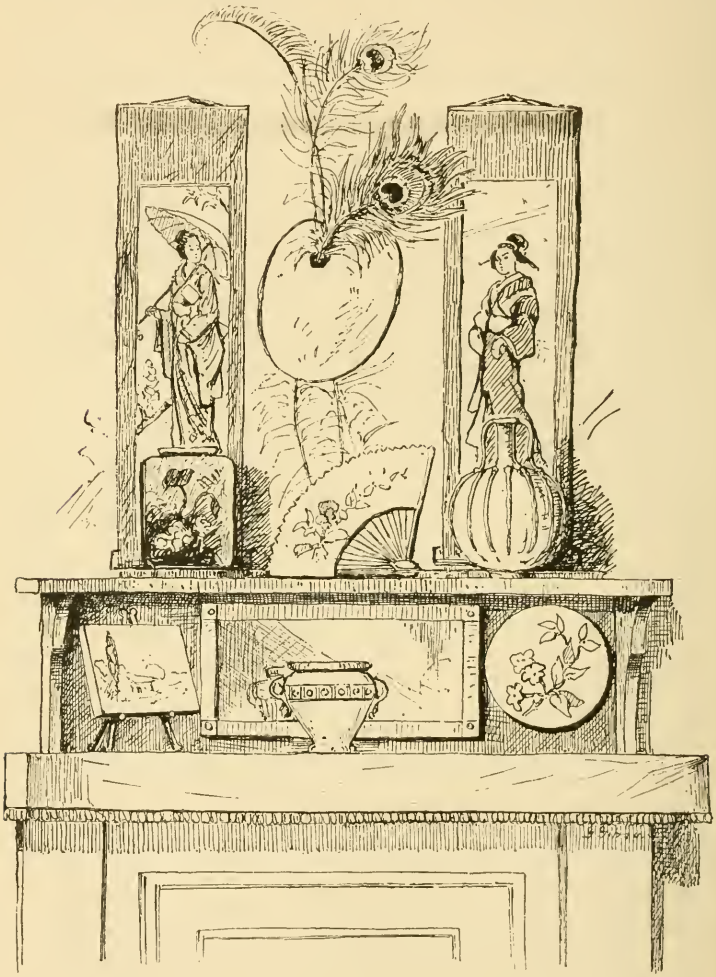
DECORATION OF THE MANTEL-SHELF.

THE very heart of home is one's "ain fireside," and around it clusters all that is pleasantest in a lifetime of recollections. How important, then, to concentrate here our best endeavors in the field of ornament.

Country people, accustomed to gather before the wide-jawed, kindly monster, with his thousand tongues of flame spouting from incandescent piles of seasoned hickory, may dispense with other ministers of cheerfulness and beauty; but such a fire is the exception in most houses where the mean, pinched, uninteresting marble mantel-piece is the rule; and wonders have been worked in the general appearance of a room by a few judicious touches of artistic decoration in this quarter.

A lady of illimitable resource, if limited in purse, once took possession of a flat, where the cheap and tawdry mantel-piece of marbleized slate falling to her lot "smote her in the face," to use her own expression, upon entering the sitting-room. A board, covered with maroon cotton velvet, was fastened upon the mantel, having a well-proportioned valance of the same material, edged with narrow crewel fringe. A width of the velvet was tacked, by her own hands, across the chimney-breast and held in place at the sides by plain wooden picture-mouldings, painted black. Across the top, concealing the selvedge of the velvet, ran a shelf, with brackets of simplest construction, made of pine

wood, by a carpenter in a side street, for seventy-five cents, and likewise painted black, to hold a half-dozen china plates



Mantel-piece, Decorated at Home.

of divers nationalities. We have not said that our fair upholsterer was also the painter on this occasion, but such is

the fact; common black paint it was, with no attempt at "ebonizing;" and she confessed to having purchased from a junk-shop the charming little gilt-framed oblong mirror that took its place beneath the shelf. What came next? Brass candlesticks, we believe, with red wax candles and ruby glass bobèches. Then, a mediæval lady's head on the diapered background of a red-brown plaque, also the result of her own labors with the brush, was hung to one side of the mirror, a blue delft platter with an unseen crack (bought on Sixth Avenue for ninety-nine cents) to flank it. A gayly colored jar of Swiss faience, two Japanese folding fans of blue and carmine with gold and silver lavishly besprent, a pilgrim-bottle and a Satsuma tea-pot, were grouped upon the mantel-board; and on the wall above hung two lovely Japanese scrolls set in dark gray paper borders, on either side of a brilliant trophy of interlaced Japanese fans of various shapes and sizes.

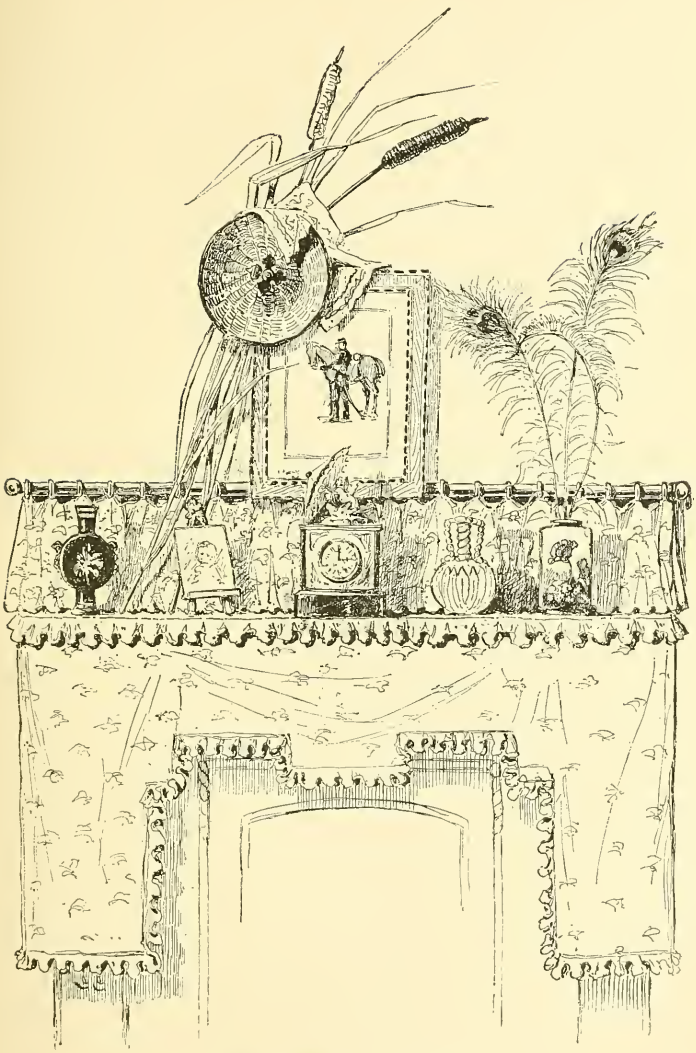
The proprietor of the flats, a worthy German, with an eye to stoves, had hermetically sealed the fireplace with sheet-iron. This obstacle yielding to persuasion, a pair of andirons and a brass fender, with a "semi-attached couple" of shovel and tongs, were assembled in its place. Although foreign to our immediate subject, we cannot leave this inviting fireside without alluding to the tea-table, almost always found on a cold winter's afternoon close beside it, with an equipage of fine porcelain delicately painted by the same hand, that, with all the rest, had found time to elaborate the cloth of fine linen, its threads drawn and interwoven with amber and crimson silk, on which her tray was placed!

The fact that an embroidered mantel-lambrequin, unlike curtains, which demand a replica of one's most wearisome efforts in needlework to complete the set, requires only a

single strip of material containing the design, is perhaps one reason for its popularity as a piece of "fancy" work. In selecting it, we should consider the light that will fall upon it by day and by night, and—it is hardly necessary to say—the colors reigning in other portions of the room. Next, the design. Remember how many times our eyes are to rest upon it, and attempt nothing that will weary them. For this reason, conventional patterns in silk or crewel, are better than flowers or garlands naturally treated. Velveteen, plush, cloth, serge, felting, satin, sateen, momie-cloth, flannel, have all been used for mantel-covers. The board may have cover and valance in one, with the corners folded under, thus avoiding the use of tacks, gilt or plush-headed, which are less liked now than formerly.

A fashion of trimming mantel-boards with large-patterned antique or Irish lace, laid over velvet, has many admirers; but it seems unsuited to a drapery designed to hang above a fire in winter-time. Macramé lace is more in keeping.

The lambrequin should not be too long. Eight to ten inches of length will suffice for the valance. English galloons in block-patterns of olive and gold, maroon and gold, black and gold, are as much used to-day as when first introduced for the purpose of finishing the valance by the Kensington schools of art-embroiderers. Coach-trimmings, in dark, rich hues, make an excellent finish to velvet or plush lambrequins. A gray linen valance divided into panels by hem-stitching, and worked with conventional flower-sprays, looks well for a summer mantel-cover. Upright groups of flowers rising from a base of dark velvet are good, and *appliqués* of plush upon cloth or sateen are entirely suitable for such a purpose. A lambrequin worked by Miss Merry for the Society of Decorative Art in the style known as



Cretonne Drapery for Mantel-piece.

"grandmother's crewel work," has been much noticed. The material used is a strip of soft cream-colored crash, and the design is a quaint and beautiful vine with conventional flowers in faded hues. The stitches used for portions of the design are darned in and out, as is often seen in "Queen Anne" embroideries.

Where it is difficult to find fringe that will match crewel embroidery, try knotted lengths of crewel and silk placed at intervals along the edge, or tufts of combed-out crewel. A band of narrow braid or velvet, done with buttonhole stitch in different silks, is useful as a finish.

Old-gold Turkish satin, with a Renaissance or cinque cento pattern applied in garnet velvet edged with gold twist, makes a handsome valance for the drawing-room mantel-piece. Another of deep gold-colored velvet, may have a running pattern of flower-branches crossed in the centre and tied with a ribbon bow, all embroidered in gold thread and yellow filoselle.

A drawing-room mantel-cover was made of Pompeian red plush, the square corners adorned with inlet *appliqués* of Turkish embroidery, the finish a fringe of *écru* cotton strands, tied with knots of colored silks, edging an insertion of *écru* lace, heavily worked with silks.

A suggestion for the liberal use of embroideries in connection with fireplace decoration is contained in the following description of a "chimney corner" exhibited by the Royal School of Art-Needlework. "The centre of the wall is filled by a fireplace of oak in the old Dutch style. It projects into the room far enough to allow of a seat to be placed on each side of the fire. A pointed roof is supported on two carved pillars. Over the gate are various small shelves on which rare pieces of china are

placed. A pair of embroidered bellows hang on the side, and the seats are covered with embroidery. Curtains of deep ruby velvet hang on each side and are intended to draw across the back of the seat, if desired. They are to be decorated with a narrow border and powderings of needle-work. A handsome embroidered valance of ruby velvet hangs between the pillars. The whole appearance of the fireplace is novel, and is suggestive of comfort to the last degree."

Fireplace curtains, running upon invisible wires, or upon visible brass rods, beneath the mantel-piece, are made to draw before the grate when unused. If the mantel-piece is one of the marble ones we desire to hide, this also serves that purpose, as it may be drawn aside just enough to reveal the fire. These draperies are made of silk, brocatelle, momie-cloth, plush or canton flannel, and may be embroidered on the edge to match the band of work around the valance above.

A lambrequin, designed to conceal the mantel-piece, was made of olive-green momie-cloth, with an inserted band of paler green sateen on which sunflowers were worked, the centres *appliqué* disks of brown velvet, crossed with yellow crewel, the petals worked in feather stitch in shaded yellow and old-gold crewels. The valance of this hanging reached to within half a yard of either end of the mantel-piece, where it was met by a longitudinal band of the same embroidery inserted in a scant drapery of momie-cloth touching the floor. This not only fulfilled its mission of concealment, but had an excellent effect in the room.

Piano Decoration and Drapery.

The substitution of a piece of good embroidery for the ordinary panelling used in upright pianos, often a fretwork of wood lined with red or blue silk, is becoming daily more popular. Outline work upon fine gray linen, or close embroidery on silk or satin, are equally in favor for piano panels.

When, as is customary for the accommodation of singers, the upright piano is turned to face the room, a square, flat hanging, of a size to cover the fluted silk at the back, may be made of Turk satin, sateen, serge, plush or linen, and embroidered, the ends fringed or trimmed with antique lace. Tussore or any one of the India silks is charming when embroidered in outlines of filoselle for a piano-back. Conventional scrolls or frieze-like processions of figures having some reference to music, are generally selected for the design.

A scarf, with long ends to hang down on either side of the top of an upright piano, was made of crash, the design on one end a bar of music, with notes and words added to suit the fancy. This was worked in split stitch in black silk. Another was made of peacock blue serge bordered with old-gold satin, on which were worked peacock's eyes in filoselle. Below this a band of green-blue plush, with a fringe of tufted crewels.

For decoration of the piano are now chiefly used odds and ends of rare embroidery ; scarfs of India cotton worked in tarnished gold ; old Roman scarfs ; lengths of Japanese brocade in gold and prune and sapphire and scarlet, bought because you could not pass them by ; a bit of Chinese im-

perial yellow damask, secured for the same feminine reason; Turkish or Algerian embroideries on old blue linen; Portuguese floss-work on creamy cotton; Italian *lacis* or darned netting, bordering squares of filmy silk; specimens of Persian *lampas* or gorgeous flowered silk; altar frontals of Spanish gold and silver work; drawn work of Spain or Italy; cinque cento patterns in *appliqué* velvet restored on modern grounds—any one, in short, of the many beautiful examples of textile fabrics garnered from all countries to fill the shelves and drawers of a dealer in bric-a-brac—may serve your purpose here.

Now that studio effects in home decoration are so fashionable, the piano offers an excellent field for the display of all such treasures. An historical mandarin's robe, of gorgeous satin stitch embroidery on green silk, was lately converted into the cover for a grand piano, fitted to the shape and trimmed with massive fringes.

Prettier, though, for this service, is an oblong of dark blue satin, lined with ivory-colored silk and edged with long ivory silk fringes, tied here and there with small rosettes of sewing silk; this cover was embroidered in satin stitch by Spanish fingers more than a century ago.

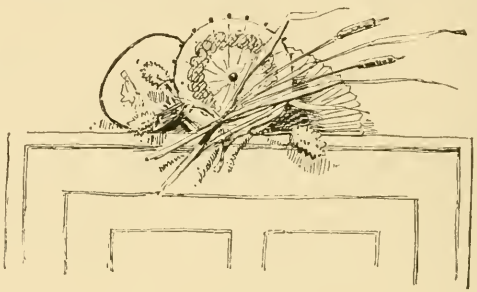
The cover for a grand piano in constant use, was made of diagonal blue cloth with an *appliqué* border of oranges and leaves, cut from colored serges and sewn upon black cloth with a couched outline of coarse crewels.

Doors, and How to Deal with Them.

Shut them, is no doubt the first method suggesting itself to the thoughtful head of a family! But this heroic treatment is not always imperative in the present reign of *por-*

tières. Sometimes a door opening inward displays a surface totally inharmonious with the decoration of the interior; and many people submit to the annoyance with helpless resignation, seeking no remedy for what is really not a difficult matter.

If the style of the room permit, a Japanese kakemono or picture on silk, may be hung upon the frame. A fine Eastern rug—say a prayer-carpet, with a pattern usually so



arranged long ago by the pilgrim who owned it as to point in the direction of Mecca—or any other quaint product of an Oriental loom in your possession, might be hung on the offending door, and would transform it into a most inviting point of observation. A plaque of Benares brass could be secured on this.

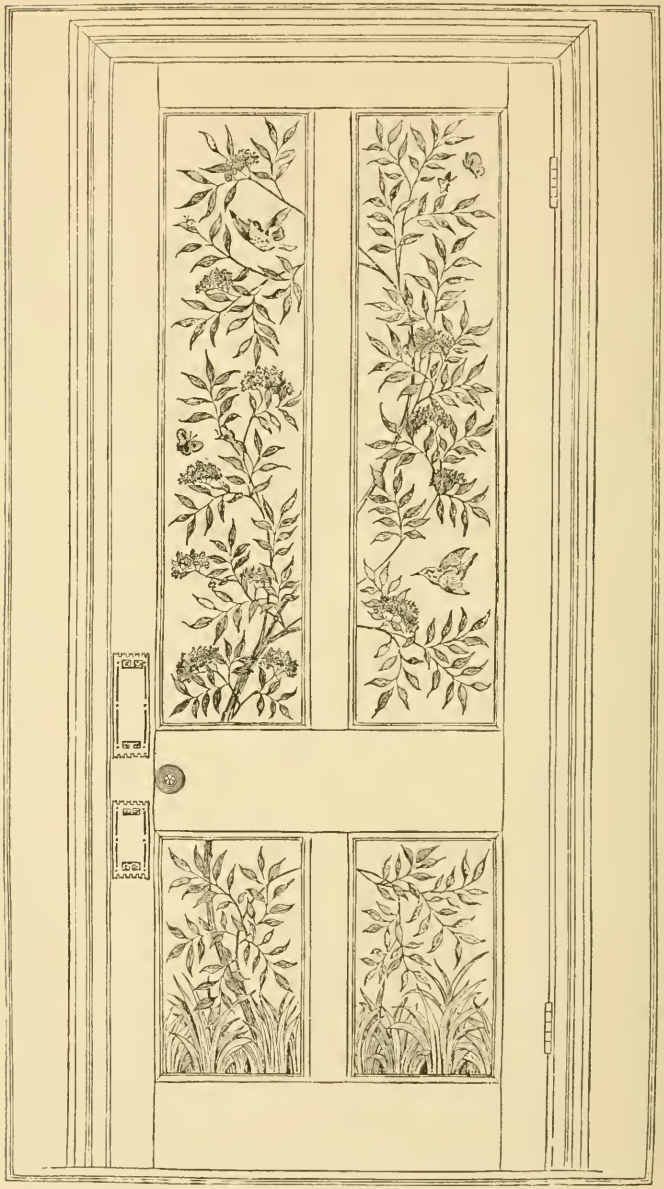
An embroidered door-hanging has been of late a popular bit of needlework. One of these, in width corresponding with the door, is made of Venetian yellow raw silk, crossed by brown velvet bands connected by an arabesque of blue silk and gold thread. Loose peacock's feathers are worked on the body of the stuff.

The same idea carried out in olive momie-cloth, with plush to match, is extremely good. The *entredeux* of silk and gold thread may be worked in hap-hazard stitches, with-

out regularity or purpose other than keeping in view the color to be displayed.

Where you desire to paint upon your panels designs in oils or water-colors, with tinted or gilded background, always consider first the relation in color between wood-work and walls. The skirting-board, window-frames and doors should be darker than the walls, and the walls in turn darker than the ceiling. If your papering, for example, be a decided birds'-egg blue, a rich effect in color may be gained by painting doors and wood-work with dull Indian red. If yellow prevails on the walls, a dark, low-toned Antwerp blue may be used on the wood-work ; if Pompeian red, try dark bronze-green doors and skirting. With sage-green on the paper, tint your wood-work with two shades of gray-green, and outline it with red. Black, maroon, chocolate-brown, orange-green are all used, as the papering demands them. You need not fear these contrasts, knowing that decorative effect depends quite as much on contrast as on similarity of tint.

Upon wood-work thus painted in sombre flat color, the amateur may find pleasure in herself applying a new form of decoration, resembling the one still used for mural adornment in Italy. This consists of gilding through stencil-plates improvised by the operator, using a brush charged with liquid gold, which can be bought, by the bottle, of any dealer in artists' supplies. A variety of figures may be drawn upon card-board, then cut out with sharp scissors, leaving spaces and perforations through which to apply the gold over sizing. Round, square, quatrefoil, lozenge-shaped or crescent patterns may be used, which, when dotted irregularly over the door-frame and panels, not too close to each other, make a charming decoration.



Decorated Door Panels.

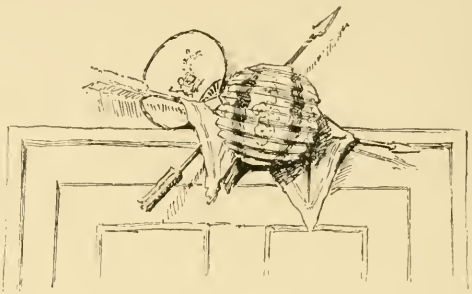
Oblongs of gray linen have been embroidered in crewel to insert in door-panels; and gold paper, painted over a ground of Chinese white with sketchy wild-flowers in water-color, is also used for this purpose.

Painting with oils is a more durable style of decoration, to be executed in the ordinary way. The wood may be plain or gilded, the design either flowers, foliage, birds and butterflies, heraldic ornaments, or monograms. The design here taken for illustration from that fertile source of suggestion in household decorative art, the "Art Amateur," represents a tree with graceful branches of foliage bearing odd Japanese-looking flowers, seen through the frame of the door. The stem of this slender tree, rising from the base of the left-hand lower panel, describes a curved line passing beneath the framework into the right-hand middle panel, and back to the left, where it tapers into feathery foliage. Grasses spring from below, while a bird or two and a few butterflies afford points of decided color. The tones of this decoration should be kept low—the background green-gray, the foliage gray-green — the flowers grayish white and pale yellow. In all cases the frame of the door should be deeper in tint than the panel. The suggestion conveyed by this design may be varied with pleasing effect.

Ascending from living-room to nursery, the doors offer a delightful opportunity to give pleasure to our little ones. The figures of Punch and Judy, with their well-known train of attendants, may be painted upon the panels, or a series of designs taken from the beloved *St. Nicholas*. By those amateurs unable to trust themselves in sketching the design, it may be transferred to the panel by means of the ordinary red paper. The Marcus Ward or Walter Crane toy-books with gilded background, are good models in color.

This should be laid on flat, without shading, stippling or cross-hatching.

The same pictures are often used to paste upon nursery door-panels ; or a grotesque mosaic of odds and ends of



birds and beasts and figures—rescued from the wreck of children's books, and cut out from their surroundings, to apply with paste just where the combination promises most amusement to the infant spectator—has proved a great success.

Japanese Art in Decoration.

Before this now reigning fancy took possession of us, a gentleman of New York, while visiting an official of high rank in Japan at his summer palace, was delighted by the effect of a room having wall-paper covered with open folding fans of every imaginable tint and pattern, no two of them alike. A duplicate of this hanging was ordered by the Japanese dignitary in compliment to his American friend, and in due time arrived in New York, where these brilliant combinations and contrasts of color may still be seen in a room devoted to the display of Japanese curios and antiques.

Lengths of Japanese paper imitating this effect can be bought for seventy-five cents each. They are useful in constructing a screen of home manufacture. Three of them will suffice for three panels, the reverse side to be lined with wall-paper of dull blue or red, with a small diaper pattern in dead gold. Edge with black picture-moulding, or with split bamboo.

A pretty hand-screen may be made by embroidering in silks and gold thread *over* the pattern printed on a Japanese paper fan. Line with cardinal, blue or old gold silk, and edge with narrow gold cord. Tie a bow of wide satin ribbon, to match, upon the handle.

A round Japanese fan has been cut square, and covered with pale blue silk, where a Japanese landscape or figure scene is painted in gouache. This, bordered with an edge of maroon velvet, had a bow of maroon and pale blue satin on the handle.

Transparent silk or gauze fans, painted with iris, lotos or leafless hawthorn, and gilded fans of the better quality, are charming hand fire-screens. These cost from $1.25 to $2 each. Tiny fans, reproducing the designs of the larger ones, have been used to form the border of a table-cover in Japanese blue cloth, where they are caught in place by stitches of colored silk.

A frieze and trophies of Japanese fans are suitable for smoking-rooms, or for the sitting-room of a seaside or country cottage fitted up for summer occupancy.

Huge Chinese palm fans, made of the natural leaf and stem of the palm, painted in gay bands of red, blue and green, are sometimes found, and are rather effective when crossed upon the wall above a folding-door.

Kakemonos, or Japanese wall-pictures, painted in trans-

parent water-color upon creamy silk or gauze, and mounted on lengths of brocade ending in wooden rollers tipped with ivory, are things of beauty that should drive into eternal banishment from our homes many a specimen of cheap art in the way of framed pictures.

The prettiest of these paintings are of flowers—flowers as the Japanese know and love them: purple iris, or stately lotus that "blows by every winding creek;" rose-azaleas, growing massed upon their hillsides; plum-blossoms of early March; camellias and chrysanthemums; wind-tossed wistaria and blossom-laden cherry boughs. For foliage they use tender shoots of young bamboo, mallow-leaves, cryptomeria, and pine twigs delicately drawn, while birds and butterflies and fire-winged insects flit among the branches. Then there are symbolic landscapes, with waterfalls, mountains, tea-houses, snow-scenes—or girls clad in exquisite raiment, of dove color and pale pink with silver sprays, or of deep blue girdled with scarfs of gold and crimson.

Kakemonos are a fashion of the remote past in Japan. One of them, borne upon a *matsuri* car in the festival given at Otsu in honor of the god Shinnomiya, is of priceless value, worked all over in richest broidery of gold, and is said to be eight hundred years old. The mounting of those sent to America is more or less elegant, and their cost varies from two or three dollars to fifty or a hundred each. They are of great value in separating engravings on a wall, and an artistic fancy has made use of them to hang irregularly along the space above the wainscot in ascending a flight of stairs. In this instance each kakemono is a separate artistic study, and all are low in tone.

The embroideries of Mrs. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.,

recently exhibited in New York, suggest a method of treatment widely differing from the conventional manner employed by the school of modern English workers. Talent so distinct and vigor so original as that manifested in these dashing bits of realistic needlework might well develop a new American industry—the construction of kakemonos of rare merit, where needle and thread usurp the place of brush and pigment.

Japanese lacquered furniture is now imported in shapes of exquisite grace and lightness—the dull backgrounds of lapis lazuli blue, or red, on tea-table and cabinet, having traceries of burnished gold. Mechanically considered, many of these specimens of handicraft are without a flaw. Every detail is properly balanced, every part fits. The perfect refinement of their decoration is in marked contrast with that laid in coarse brush loads upon the familiar red surfaces, which, in the eyes of many, represent Japanese art in its efflorescent glory. Unfortunately, our climate is a sworn foe to this lovely lacquered furniture, which is liable to shrink and fall apart when installed in our furnace-heated homes. There are, however, more durable cabinets and tray-stands to hold a vase or flower-pot, and many little objects of gold lacquer, carved ivory, amber, jade and carnelian, besides the bronzes, porcelain and pottery we may secure to comfort our souls withal.

It is impossible to dismiss the subject of Japanese art, so rich an element of decoration in modern homes, without mention of their stuffs. Of these one may turn over almost as delightful a variety as in Kiyôto itself, on the counters of several shops in New York, some of them in charge of natives of Japan, speaking English perfectly, and distinguished by singular intelligence and courtesy. Beautiful silks and

brocades from the looms of Nishigin ; crêpes of finest texture ; fabrics of clinging woollen, soft in hue and decorated with artistic patterns ; and chintzes in melting tints of ivory, amber, blue, gray and rose color, with streaks of gold and silver upon designs of a darker shade than the ground.

For those who protest against Japanese decoration as gaudy and conspicuous, we give the following description of a native interior, from the pen of a lady who recently occupied it.* "The whole front of my room is composed of *shôji*, which slide back during the day. The ceiling is of light wood, crossed by bars of dark wood, and the posts which support it are of dark polished wood. The panels are of wrinkled sky-blue paper splashed with gold. At one end are two alcoves with floors of polished wood. In one hangs a kakemono, or wall-picture, a painting of a blossoming branch of the cherry on white silk—a perfect piece of art, which in itself fills the room with freshness and beauty. On a shelf in the other alcove is a very valuable cabinet with sliding-doors, on which peonies are painted on a gold ground. A single spray of rose-azalea in a pure white vase hanging on one of the polished posts, and a single iris in another, are the only decorations. The mats are very fine and white, but the only furniture is a folding screen with some suggestions of landscape in Indian ink."

Thin Curtains for the Drawing-Room.

Artists long ago realized the garishness of light streaming through the starched white surface of large-patterned lace, but it has needed the present revolution in household fur-

* From "Unbeaten Tracks in Japan," by Miss Isabella L. Bird.

nishing to convince amateurs. Madras curtains, in buff or cream undressed muslin, with conventional Indian designs in semitones of color, have come to supply the demands now made in window furnishing. Most beautiful they are; and curtains in great variety are sold from $12 to $25 a window—the same stuff by the yard from $1.25 to $2. This last has no border, and may be hemmed simply and drawn close to the pane, or trimmed with lace and used as are other thin curtains hung beneath the heavier ones.

A soft and peculiarly mellow light was made in a room full of curious and handsome things, by lining Madras cream muslin, having a small diapered design in buff, with undressed buff silk.

Any thin Indian fabric, especially their matchless mulls, may be used for this purpose. A set of curtains in *écru* India muslin has geometrical figures outlined here and there in gray, and buff and pale red filoselle.

In cheaper fabrics come cream muslins with hair-line stripes of red and blue, at fifty cents a yard; also an inexpensive white muslin, with red stripes, a great favorite for country-house sash curtains, where it may be tied back with red ribbons. Muslin curtains, with strips of antique lace let in, are always fashionable; and Nottingham lace is now sold in excellent block patterns or with small, well-defined ornaments, in strong contrast with those of former days, when our fathers and mothers thought there could be nothing more beautiful than the representation upon their window drapery of immense tropical jungles of leafage, ferns and palms, mixed with roses, tulips and lilies of the valley!

There are to be had sundry semi-transparent stuffs, white and cream-colored (whose names so vary in the different

shops that it is difficult to indicate them), which may be combined with insertings and trimmed with edgings of the common Nottingham antique lace at eight to ten cents a yard, three inches wide, admirably adapted for this purpose. These curtains are sometimes lovely in decorative effect, and much of it is due to the excellent design of the lace named, a close diapered pattern with large, irregular meshes, popular from the moment of introduction in our shops.

Very light, cheap and pretty are the *écru* scrym curtains, worked in outlined flowers along the hem-stitched border. Any of the lily forms, amaryllis or poinsettia, conventionally drawn, outline well; or there are many border designs to choose from. Work the pattern in red or in blue crewels, and on the edge of the hem-stitched hem, fasten red or blue tassels of combed crewels.

The cost of material for such curtains has been reckoned at $5 for the two windows. In the rooms of the Society of Decorative Art they are hung beneath upper sash frames of tinted glass.

Strainer cloth, recently arisen from dairy regions into the drawing-room, appears in charming window-curtains, bordered with drawn-work and knotted fringe made by ravelling the stuff. A blackberry vine worked in crewels has starry white flowers, with fruit—black, green and red. Fine cheese-cloth, edged with lace, has been beautifully embroidered for window draperies in vines of honeysuckle or jasmine. Work like this, meant to show on both sides, requires more care than hasty amateurs are willing, in general, to bestow on it.

India Mulls.

These fabrics, used as scarfs by native dancing-girls, are imported by Mr. Louis Tiffany for sash window-curtains, to accompany draperies from his atelier. Like woven air are the exquisite webs, to be had in tints of dark blue, currant color, buff, salmon and cream—stuffs that might have veiled from profane gaze the loveliness of "Break o' Day," "Cluster o' Pearls," "Heart's Delight," and the rest of those heroines who tormented Abou Hassan while he was temporary Caliph of Bagdad!

For a Turkish smoking-room in New York, the sash curtains of dark blue mull had tiny silver sequins sewed at intervals along the edge. Curtains of salmon mull had a delicate tracery of silk in the same shade upon the hem.

Embroidered Window-Shades.

As a variety upon the present mania for red Holland window-shades, their lurid glare suggesting, as was recently said, "a descent into the Inferno at every afternoon tea," many ladies are embroidering, in outline work with filoselle and crewels, shades made of gray or buff linen. A simple conventional pattern is best for this purpose, to be worked in browns and deep crimson near the hem, which is finished with guipure d'art, or with cotton fringe. Shades from the South Kensington Art Schools, recently imported, have rather conspicuous designs of conventional blue flowers and leaves. Shades with drawnwork borders are very handsome; and a set coming from Fourney, in Paris, made of gray linen, adorned with crewel and open work with gold embroidery, are edged with guipure lace. Shades made of Tussore silk are lovely, and those in pale

buff linen, with brown silk embroidery, are always in good taste; also striped gray and white Holland shades, through which the light falls soft and clear. The puffed shades in yellow silk, introduced a few years ago, were too conspicuous to be generally liked; and the crimson ones will doubtless have an equally brief career, even though the fashion is passed on to us by good society in London!

Drawing-Room Chairs.

Chairs, like after-dinner coffee-cups, seem to be selected nowadays with a view to their harlequin effect. One sees

Design for Embroidered Chair-Cover or Cushion.

the little Louis XV. gilt beauties, their satin seats powdered with embroidered flowers, drawn confidingly up to the arm

of a square Puritan "Cromwell" in oak, severely plain save for its dark cushion in maroon plush. Gilt wicker, flaunting with bows like a bed of poppies, confronts the rigid dignity of a Tudor or Eastlake specimen in solid wood, while India teak and Wakefield rattan hob-nob most cor-

Design for Embroidered Chair-Cover or Cushion.

dially. The Chinese bamboo chairs, gilded, are light and elegant when sparingly introduced, and the old mahogany three-cornered fireside chairs, for which cushions may be worked in cross-stitch tapestry in faded colors, bring back delightfully the old-time memories of our colonial homes in America.

The large, square-seated "Cromwell" chair is made by some leading upholsterers, having finials at each angle of the back, decorated with velvet and gilt nails, as are the arms and framework. For these, a back and a seat-cushion may be worked on peacock blue or garnet velvet, in a close, conventional pattern suggesting mediæval floriated stuffs; but we suggest that only the best material, nicest work, finest stitches, most patient care, be bestowed on such embroidery. Remember, it is meant to last, that the young people of 1981 may exclaim over it in delight!

Market Harborough Chair.

A luxurious retreat for an idle moment is offered by a black wicker chair cushioned with sage-green stamped plush, and tied with numerous bows of sage-green and pale pink-satin ribbon. A large pink mallow flower with foliage is embroidered on the seat, and the rounded cushion for the back has a similar device.

Shaker Rocking-Chairs.

Near at hand is a rocking-chair of that popular variety known as the "Shaker," made by the Shaker brethren at Lebanon, and yearly brought away by summer visitors to Berkshire as souvenirs of that thriving settlement, but now also a regular article of commerce in New York and Boston shops. These little chairs, made of hard wood, stained and varnished to a rich mahogany brown, are wonderfully light, graceful and easy. Add to one of them a cover of plush or velvet, with embroidered bands, and it is attractive enough to appear in any lady's boudoir.

A small Shaker rocking-chair without arms has a cover of brown velveteen, with a lengthwise band of gray linen inserted, on which is embroidered a vine of shaded pink honey-suckle, with brown stems and leaves of green and brown.

Another has a seat-cover of slate-green plush, with a square in the centre of olive-green plush, on which is worked a conventional design in crewels. A border done to match is edged with a tufted fringe of combed-out crewels.

A cover of stamped dark blue velveteen has the incised pattern traced with yellow Dacca silk in twisted chain stitch.

Any hand skilled in home-upholstery can construct one of these covers without resorting to professional aid, and a "Shaker" adopted into the household will never again be willingly dispensed with. The Shakers make rugs to cover their chairs, by many preferred to a more ornamental finish. The larger arm-chairs and rocking-chairs of this manufacture are delightfully comfortable. They are to be had on Broadway at from $3.50 to $10, without rugs. Footstools, or benches to match, are supplied from the same establishment. These chairs have been found to be a successful present to friends in England, who are pleased with an opportunity to domesticate a bit of furniture distinctively American.

Oxford Chairs in Wakefield Rattan.

A new chair in rattan, called "the Oxford," has become very popular. Square, compact, finely woven, with arms enclosed, and without rockers, the Oxford may be bought in the natural color of the rattan at $9; the same ebonized

for $10, and in black and gold for $14. Those in plain rattan are beautiful when cushioned with blue plush. Cushions of peacock blue, of old gold or of garnet, are used for the black and gold chairs. The new plaited border is a great improvement on the open one so long used to thread with ribbons.

A Wood-Basket for the Drawing-Room.

A Christmas offering of the Society of Decorative Art was a wood-basket in black wicker, the high flat side decorated with a square of dark blue velveteen, displaying a large conventional flower of the daisy type in old-gold plush, with brown centre crossed with gold, the petals also outlined with gold. The stiff foliage of embroidered leaves was carried into the four corners of the square, the leaves outlined with gold. Along the lower edge of the blue velveteen was a narrow fringe in sewing silks.

Sofa-Cushion in Appliqué Plushes.

On a ground of mignonette-green sateen, a bold pinnate leaf (suggesting that of the common American sumac) extends diagonally from the lower right-hand corner of the square. The decoration, cut from dark moss-green plush, is veined and outlined with gold thread. Interwoven with the leaflets, and beginning at the upper left-hand corner, descends a motto in antique letters, cut from garnet plush and traced with gold :

"Lie still and slumber."

This handsome cushion is lined with garnet satin and edged with a cord of garnet and gold.

Cretan Embroidery Appliqué on Plush.

A cushion of Cretan embroidery transferred to plush is always elegant. Turkish or Cretan squares, containing detached sprigs suitable for appliqué, may be bought in many of the shops, from $1 up. This work requires much care in the execution.

Tidies.

We have said nothing of tidies, articles in which, to some minds, the whole scheme of modern decorative needlework begins and ends. This we may infer from the extraordinary objects in the way of crewel-work on linen crash proudly exhibited by workers who assume to know "all about *decorative art*, of course!" Having achieved a diminutive sunflower coupled with giant bulrushes in a rigid group, upon one end of a bit of kitchen towelling, they are entitled to the boast!

Whatever may be her private conviction regarding the patchwork effect of tidies in a handsome room, no housekeeper dares lift up her voice in protest against their use. Let them at least be unobtrusive in color and design, and dispense with them wherever possible. Tussore or India washing silk may be covered with a conventional pattern in monochrome embroidery for this purpose. Towels bordered with old drawn-work, dark blue linen embroidered in white, cross-stitch embroidery in silks or cotton, Holbein work, are all suitable for tidies. Cretan embroidery is, however, the fashion of the hour, one that it is to be hoped will long endure.

Bell-pulls.

These have been brought into use again by decorators representing the reign of good Queen Anne. Velvet, silk and silk canvas are the best materials for this work. A stiff lining is added, and a ring and a narrow brass bar are secured to it at bottom. Conventionalized flowers in a vine pattern look well in such a quarter.

Lamps, Candles and Shades.

Of late there has been a large demand for decorated lamps, and the leading shops are full of them. The more costly ones, from $12 to $30 each, are substantially mounted in fine brass, with jars of Limoges, Bennett, Longwy or Gien faïence, or of an oriental ware. The occasional Deck lamp is beautiful enough to tempt a wiser woman than Aladdin's wife to part with her husband's treasure! With the addition of a globe in engraved glass, and that greatest illuminator of modern homes, the patent Duplex burner, one of these lamps is a joy in the household. Porcelain lamps with the ordinary burners are to be had mounted in brass, at $6. For these, vases of cheap Satsuma and other wares are employed. Lamps of polished brass, with the Duplex burner, cost $7 each. But the friendly German student-lamp has its special uses and will never be forsaken, even for these lovely painted jars of porcelain or faïence bearing moon-like globes.

Candlesticks and candelabra are sold in brass, glass, china and pottery. Decorated candles have been superseded by those in clear colors, of which rose, crimson and

white are most used. The patent wedge-bottom is a great merit in these modern candles, enabling them to fit into any socket. Pink or red candles, fluted in spirals, are pretty for drawing-room or dinner-table. Upon the *bobèche*, the glass or porcelain cup used to catch the drippings of candle-wax, modern taste has lavished abundant fancy. They come in blue china, in Gien flowered ware, in Venetian glass lipped and beaded with color, in clear crystal starred with gold, and in Bohemian glass, ruby, rose and blue.

Candle-shades with fixtures to sustain them are made of colored paper, plain or ornamented. These are much used at present, in plain colors and cut into patterns lifted by the knife into a sort of low relief, or in crackle shades with flower decoration.

Lamp-shades are now imported in ribbed porcelain, white, blue, rose and green. They have taken the place of tissue-paper shades, an epidemic prevailing everywhere last season. The amount of gymnastic exercise necessary from the gentlemen and servants of a family, whilst tissue-paper shades continued to blaze up at unexpected moments, upon inaccessible gas-burners, was immense.

Abat-jours, the French shades in drawn crimson silk, with heavy fringes, are still used. Coverings for the lamps are made of hand-made tape guipure lined with crimson, blue or yellow silk. Lamp-shades are also made of silk joined in sections, and painted in gouache colors. The dainty work on silk lamp-shades executed by Mrs. Eugenia Raymond is well known through the Society of Decorative Art. A frill of lace is often added to the rim of the open porcelain shade, to soften the light beneath. Handkerchief-shaped pieces of lace have a circle cut from the centre to admit the lamp-chimney.

Cinderella's Slippers.

In the original fairy-tale of Cinderella, of French origin, the Prince gives to the little maiden a pair of slippers lined with minever or petit ver, a fur which was the prerogative of royalty. In the story translated into English, "petit ver" was rendered "little glass," and thus came down to us a myth beloved of children and held in memory by their elders, with whom the fairy slipper has ever been a favorite device in boudoir and drawing-room. One sees the slipper in cut glass, in iridescent glass, in engraved glass; but prettier are those in fine white porcelain, dotted over with tiny blue corn-flowers, or in old Dresden ware with garlands and rosettes of flowers in relief. They appear also in Sèvres, in Worcester or Minton porcelain, in pink, blue and yellow. A cluster of violets often finds its way to the toe of this dainty trifle, and again it is filled with bon bons and set temptingly at the elbow of my lady's guest, on a low velvet-covered table with which it so well assorts, and where it is found in company with a dozen other *bibelots* as useless and coquettish as itself. At New Year, in Paris, nothing is more in demand as an *étrenne* for a lady, than a shoe, sabot or slipper made of satin, silk or straw, embroidered and filled with bon bons. There are also Louis XV. shoes in frosted silver, for jewel-boxes, Japanese *mules* or heelless slippers embroidered with mock turquoise, coral and gold, Watteau shoes in *vieux* Sèvres, sabots of straw worked in chenille, and slippers of carved ivory.

Bandanna Waste-Baskets and Sweet-Grass Baskets from Mount Desert.

The pretty baskets made by the Indians at Mount Desert are yearly becoming more popular, and may be found in a hundred homes, whence the chill breath of winter has not succeeded in banishing all remembrance of that much-beloved resort. All the bright summer through, the dusky workmen in the camps along the coast of Frenchman's Bay sit weaving from birch-wood, split, dyed and crossed by plaited strands of sweet vanilla grass, the graceful shapes carried off so eagerly by their many visitors. The grass retains its fragrance astonishingly; and, months after a visit to Bar Harbor, a sudden whiff of odor from one of these baskets will conjure up a revival of by-gone holidays. Quick to imitate forms and combine colors, the Indians have copied a number of models given them by summer visitors to Mount Desert. On one occasion a lady displayed in one of the tents a Madras handkerchief, such as have recently been worn for costumes, parasols and petticoats, asking if a basket could be made to repeat the colors. The idea was quickly caught, and in a short time a number of split-wood waste-baskets were produced, in brilliant dyes harmoniously combined, which speedily became the fashion. One of these baskets lined with turkey red or crimson woollen stuff, with bows of mixed satin ribbon, is charming in effect. The sweet-grass crewel baskets, *vide-poches* and wall-pockets, are prettiest when a soft red dye in the wood is blent with the gray green of the dried grass. They can only be had of the Indians in their summer settlement.

Silk-Rag Curtains.

Collect every scrap of silk, whether new or old, to be found about the house. Sometimes a faded light silk may, for a trifling sum, be dyed crimson or dark blue, which helps materially. Cut the silk into strips, from a quarter of an inch to half an inch wide. Whether bias or straight, even or irregular, sew all the pieces together securely, and fasten your thread firmly. There is no necessity for a chain. Roll the strips into balls, keeping each color to itself. Weigh the balls, and when you have accumulated eleven pounds of silk, send them to a weaver, who folds the strips into narrow bands to suit himself, and weaves them at a charge of twenty-eight cents a yard. This will give you eight yards of material thirty-five inches wide, for the modest price of $2.24, certainly an inexpensive method of securing an excellent result in curtains or *portière*. The woof is of linen thread, and is scarcely visible. Cutting and joining the strips for silk-rag curtains is a good occupation for the little girls of a family.

Umbrella, Embroidered.

A novelty introduced by the Society of Decorative Art was a sea-side or lawn-party umbrella in twilled turkey-red of a fine quality, lined with thin white silk, and embroidered near the top with a handful of clover-blossoms and their leaves, in crewel. This can be done quite inexpensively by ripping to pieces a discarded parasol, cutting out the gores of turkey-red exactly by the old ones, and after working the clover or any design preferred, giving the parasol to an

experienced umbrella-maker to recover. Such a parasol looks best with a bamboo or club handle of natural wood, polished, with all the knots left upon it. Some young ladies choose eccentric sticks sold by a vender of gentlemen's canes, and have them made up as parasol-handles.

Silk parasols for dress occasions may be embroidered in the same way; but we advise especial care in the selection of a design, with very low tones of color. There is but a step into over-ornamentation of parasols, which should never be conspicuous, save on occasions like those above mentioned, when the surroundings provoke picturesque effects. Parasols painted in water-color have been used recently, the design, generally of flowers and sprays of leaves, made to harmonize with the costume worn; and as such things are purely a matter of personal taste, there can be no general rules laid down concerning them.

Embroidered Aprons.

Tennis aprons and pouches are made of linen embroidered with racquets and other devices in crewel.

Quaint aprons are made of a simple strip of crash, with borders of Russian work in red or blue embroidery cotton.

Fish-wife aprons of pongee are embroidered in silk or crewel, and tied with satin ribbons round the waist.

Knitting-aprons, with pockets for the ball, etc., are made of crash, having in antique text the motto "Tossed and re-tossed, the ball incessant flies."

Bags.

Reticules and bon-bon bags are made of satin, white, cream, buff, crimson, pink, blue and black, and are tied with satin drawing-strings. These may be painted in gouache color, or embroidered in filoselle, and should have rather broad satin drawing-strings.

A bag of cream satin has a single peacock's feather embroidered on the side. Another is painted with a tuft of violets, and has satin strings of a pale violet shade. Daisy, clover, cyclamen, primrose, buttercup and dandelion serve as designs for this purpose.

A novelty from South Kensington is a satin bag or handkerchief-pouch cut pear-shaped, narrowing to a strap to hang upon the arm. One of these, in sapphire-blue velvet, is richly worked in an arabesque pattern of gold and silver thread with silks, and is lined with ivory satin.

Sachets Painted and Embroidered.

Sachets, always to be seen in displays of needlework, afford scope for great variety in shape and style. French workwomen are especially expert in the production of these dainty nothings, a few of which we describe.

A black satin sachet, painted in gouache with an exquisite Watteau scene combining the usual shepherdess with doves and crooks and roses, is edged with a cord of heavy black chenille and gold.

A sachet of gray silk canvas is ornamented with drawn-work and embroideries in gold thread, lined with gray quilted

silk, and tied with bows of gray satin ribbon. A quilling of gray satin ribbon with a fine gold cord surrounds it.

A white satin sachet, lined with blue, has a wreath of embroidered forget-me-nots around the name in the centre.

A white silk sachet is painted in gouache, with sprays of white lilacs; this, edged with Valenciennes lace, is made of the heaviest gros grain, and is suitable for a bridal present.

Sachets vary in size—from the square, intended to hold handkerchiefs, to the long, very long ones, meant to contain sixteen-buttoned or mousquetaire gloves. Those worked upon linen with crewels, and lined with silk, are as useful as they are pretty. For them, such designs as morning-glory, yellow jasmine, myrtles, clematis and apple-blossom, are appropriate.

Library Table Cover.

A table-cover of crimson cloth is edged with a heavy bullion fringe of the same shade. Near the edge is inserted a band of crimson plush closely worked with an arabesque of gold-colored silk.

Mantel Lambrequin in Transfer Work.

The embroidery on Cretan or Turkish towels, so much used now for tidies, may be transferred to maroon plush or sage-green velvet, and embroidered down with brier-stitch in colored filoselle. A mantel lambrequin, done in this way, may have irregular shelves of ebonized wood backed by the same plush set above it, making a cabinet to contain all one's choicest bits of Dresden china, miniatures and old Satsuma ware.

Candle-Stand Cover.

This is made of a square of olive momie-cloth, edged with tufted crewel fringe. A border, formed of alternate squares of old gold and olive sateen, joined like patch-work, is wrought with sprays of blue periwinkle, flowers and foliage forming a vine. The same flowers are scattered here and there upon the centre of the cloth. This cover may be made of any size, and is very pretty when complete.

Wicker Lounging-Chair.

A wicker chair has been fitted up with cushions of felting of a dead-leaf-color, embroidered with flaring scarlet poppies, and held in place by knots of scarlet satin ribbon.

Tea-Cloth for Nursery.

A square of white linen is bordered with a three-inch band of fine twilled turkey red, edged with a knotted fringe in white cotton the width of the border. Upon the cloth is worked in gray filoselle an outlined stone wall, over which peep merry children's heads, coifed after Kate Greenaway's illustrations, in dainty old-time fashion. This design runs all around the border of the cloth—the four corners intersected by representations, in black filoselle, of an iron-grated gate, where, behind the bars, other quaint little figures are seen, courtseying and peeping mischievously out. These subjects can be taken from "Under the Window," from Walter Crane's books—or from that charming volume "Afternoon Tea," which is brimming with suggestions.

Waste-Paper Basket of Wakefield Rattan.

A basket of Wakefield rattan, of a tubular shape, has around it a band of fine silk canvas worked with a vine of crimson trumpet-creepers. The upper edge of this band has a strip of crimson plush; the lower, one of blue plush, finished with a fringe of soft crimson chenille, knotted with old-gold silk. Where the band is joined around the basket the seam is concealed by bows of satin ribbon in the three shades of crimson, blue and gold.

Banner-Screen with Owls in Council.

Where it is desirable to relieve the eye from constant contemplation of bright hues and warm fabrics, a banner-screen may be embroidered upon slate-gray silk, with a design of three weird little owls holding council upon a leafless bough. A crescent moon in silver reigns in the firmament above; and the clouds are mere gilt-edged suggestions, after the manner of the Japanese. Frame in ebonized wood.

Bracket for a Vase.

A square bracket in ebonized wood has an oblong drapery of maize-colored silk, edged with crimson velvet, and embroidered with red and white clover and hovering butterflies. These had a success at the Society of Decorative Art, where they were bought at $15 each.

Sofa-Cushion in Matelassé.

To make a showy sofa-cushion with little labor, use white *matelassé* canvas or mandarin yellow cloth. Upon this make geometrical designs of many-colored bits of cloth, velvet and silk, working them down in point russe with all the remnants of silk and crewel accumulating in one's basket for many months. The effect of this kaleidoscope of colors is very good.

Gilt Wicker Basket.

A square gilt wicker waste-basket has the four upper corners decorated with triangular pieces of garnet silk plush or velvet, worked in cross stitch in old-gold silks on canvas, the threads afterward withdrawn. Add a tasselled fringe of silk and crewel, and line with silk or worsted stuff. A quilling of garnet satin ribbon, with cord of old gold and garnet silk in the centre, finishes the top.

Purse Work-Bags.

Crewel-bags are made of three lengths of yellow, ruby and peacock-blue serge or flannel, joined together in purse fashion, with slits for the opening. The ends are caught with tassels in silk or wool, and the centre is confined by brass, ebonized cherry, oak or ash curtain-rings of a large size.

Crib-Cover with Motto.

A crib-cover much in demand at the rooms of the Society of Decorative Art, was worked with silk, in outline upon white linen, and edged with lace. The design was five sleepy birds upon a branch, and by way of motto underneath :

> " Little babes which sleep all night,
> Laugh in the face of sorrow ;
> Little birds which sleep all night,
> Sing carols on the morrow."

This design might be worked upon transparent washing material, and lined with blue silk, if intended for a christening gift.

Crib-Blankets.

A pattern of which no one ever seems to tire for a baby's blanket is the soft, fine, downy, lamb's-wool square, bound with blue ribbon, and worked with the well-known group of Sir Joshua Reynolds' cherub heads, in outline, with blue silk.

Baby's Carriage Outfit.

This cover was made of fine cheese-cloth, lined with blue silk, and fringed with blue crewel. In each corner was worked a spray of briar-roses mingled with forget-me-not. A monogram in the centre was surrounded by a graceful wreath of the same flowers, worked in silk and crewel. A parasol in cheese-cloth, trimmed with Cluny lace, was em-

broidered to go with the cover and lined with blue. The pretty carriage these articles were to accompany was made of Wakefield rattan.

Splash Curtains.

A linen splash curtain for the wash-stand should be made of yard-wide linen, to suit the wash-stand in length. They are commonly worked with crewels in outline stitch. One design has a pond surrounded by ferns and bulrushes, with frogs in comical attitudes upon the brink and in the water.

Another, called "The Morning Dip," has a sheet of water with pond-lilies, sedge and birds.

"Splash, Splash" is a woodland spring, where birds are bathing amid ferns and flowers. These and other designs, already stamped upon ordinary *écru* linen, may be bought for $1.50 each. They are serviceable, and are a variety upon the white muslin drawn over pink or blue cambric, so long employed.

Bonnet-Baskets.

In some English country-houses a bonnet-basket is found in the bed-room assigned to a guest. A flat wicker basket, with a cover large enough to contain two or three bonnets or hats in ordinary use, may be lined with blue or pink diagonal silesia, the edge and top interlaced with ribbon to match, which is tied in bows at the corners of the lid. A square of fringed-out linen with a design of daisies embroidered in the centre can be made to embellish the lid, if desired.

Dressing-Room Clothes-Basket.

A small hamper for used linen may be trimmed with bands of crash, worked in crewel and finished with quillings of worsted braid.

Shoe Bags and Boxes.

Shoe-bags, after the model of the old-fashioned ones made of holland stitched in compartments, may be rendered a little more ornamental by using crash, lined with turkey red and bound with scarlet worsted braid. Upon each pocket is worked a spray of carnations in crewel.

Shoe-boxes, sometimes preferred, may be made of a pine box, neatly lined with turkey red, with crash for lid and sides worked in cross stitch with crewels and tacked on the edge, finished with narrow black velvet and secured with gilt-headed nails.

Pin-Cushions.

Orders given at the Society of Decorative Art were for small squares and circles of fine linen-cambric, exquisitely worked with sprays of different flowers, such as myosotis, yellow jasmine, daisies, etc., and trimmed with inserting and border of Valenciennes. These, laid upon square or round satin pin-cushions trimmed with quilled satin ribbon of the color indicated by the flower, were destined for the guest-rooms of a North River country-house.

Squares of guipure d'art are always effective upon silk or satin cushions, although not so new.

The small cushions of Japanese crêpe, shaped and painted to represent fishes and birds, are good for use in bachelor bedrooms.

Pin-cushion covers in cheese-cloth, embroidered and trimmed with lace, wash well and keep their looks.

Toilet-Covers.

For the oak or ash dressing-bureau of a gentleman's room, a strip of plush, hanging down on either side and trimmed with knotted fringe, looks well; but, to be serviceable, it should have a protecting strip of linen, bordered with drawn-work or decked with Holbein embroidery in colored cottons, on which the brushes, etc., may be laid.

For the square-topped "Eastlake" chest of drawers nothing can surpass the linen cover combining both drawn-work and Holbein work. The shelves of the Society of Decorative Art are always full of beautiful specimens suitable for this purpose.

The Duchesse Dressing-Table.

Eastlake's protest, "humble, but emphatic," against the "toilet-table encircled with a muslin petticoat, stiffened by a crinoline of pink or blue calico," which in his eyes "just represents a milliner's notion of the 'pretty' and nothing more," may be very just, but alas! it will never be accepted while feminine taste dictates the arrangement of a dressing-room. Dear to woman's heart is the convenient little "Duchesse," always clean and fresh and dainty, with its snowy draperies. Add to this her obstinate conviction that

nowhere else can she so comfortably "do" her hair as when worshipping on a low chair before this enticing shrine!

A Duchesse table was made by covering a common pine stand with pink silesia, and putting over that a flounce of fine cheese-cloth embroidered in crewel with the brown stems, green leaves and pink blossoms of the wild rose, in a graceful vine. A linen strip or scarf, hem-stitched in squares, worked with detached roses, leaves and buds, and fringed at either end, lay across the top. One of the small, old-fashioned mahogany dressing-glasses, with brass mountings and three drawers, was set upon the cover, and over the mirror hung, tent-wise, a cheese-cloth drapery lined with pink, edged with lace, and embroidered with roses like the flounce. A lace pin-cushion in pink, two brass dragon candlesticks with pink wax-candles and *bobèches*, ivory brushes and cut-glass bottles, completed the fitting-up of this pretty bit of furniture.

The Duchesse table is often covered with chintz or cretonne, with fluted ruffles to match the curtains and other bed-room draperies. When made of large-dotted muslin over pink or blue cambric, and trimmed with cotton lace, the draperies may be washed repeatedly and yet always add a certain freshness to the room.

In many English and American houses, the "Duchesse" is used without mirror draperies, and is placed in a window for convenience of full light upon the toilet. In this case, the mirror-frame may be carved or ornamented, or, to quote again from Eastlake, with muslin "twisted round." The glass is sometimes removed, the frame covered with blue or pink has muslin puffed over it, and the mirror is then restored to its place.

"IN TEA-CUP TIME."

TEA-LOVERS are a universal brotherhood and sisterhood of humanity, including Elia and Cousin Bridget, who were "old fashioned enough to drink their hyson unmixed, still, of an afternoon," and also Mistress Gamp with her familiar, Betsey Prig.

When, in his days of young enthusiasm, Matthew Arnold went to render tribute to George Sand, "She made me sit by her," he wrote, "and poured out for me the boisson fade et mélancolique, as Balzac calls it, for which English people are thought abroad to be always thirsting—tea!" More in sympathy with the great panacea is another representative Englishman — Mr. Thomas Hughes: "Pray, haven't you kettledrum in America?" he asked recently, of a lady in New York. "For my part, I pity the people who don't have kettledrum. In England the men go in for it, quite as much as the women. To me, it is the pleasantest hour of the twenty-four—this hanging around with a tea-cup, for a little informal chat, toward five o'clock."

The genial author of "Tom Brown" received prompt assurance that there never was a period when the five o'clock tea-table and all its appurtenances played so conspicuous a part as now in our homes. Quite out of date is the artless American who, arriving late in the afternoon upon a visit to an English country-house, looked for the advent of a band of music when "the drum" was ordered by his hostess.

After drinking a cup of tea and eating thin bread and butter with the assembled family, he was escorted to his room by a solemn flunkey, candle in hand; and, there abandoned to his devices, went hungry to bed wondering if this were the extent of boasted English hospitality—to be, after a while, aroused and astonished by a servant sent to inquire if he was not coming down to dinner.

Belinda and Evelina, exchanging gossip in sacques and hoops at an eighteenth-century drum, knew not the numberless devices that to-day attend this enticing ante-prandial repast. It is the fleur fine of entertainments—a meal so purged of the grosser elements that even Byron, who hated a bread-and-butter-eating woman, might gaze approvingly on its fair participants! This is the hour for confidential revealings that break into shy utterance as the light of lamp and candles glimmers out upon the fading day. Above all, is it not the supreme moment when woman meets woman for the discussion of their fellow-beings?—an operation not always as mild as the whipping with ostrich-plumes which befell poor Graciosa at the hands of Grognon's furies, in the ancient fairy-tale!

No doubt the present passion for five-o'clock tea is in some sort an outgrowth of the china mania, so delightfully shown by the "æsthetic" Algernon and his "intense" bride, in their rapture over a newly acquired six mark tea-pot. "Is it not consummate?" he inquires—to be answered fervently, "It is indeed! Oh, Algernon, do let us try to live up to it!" Like Atra Cura, this mania sits behind and drives us — rash and reckless. To acquire these brittle treasures we exhaust our time and money; for them we explore dingy dens of shops in remote streets, and stand sighing before the porcelain wonders displayed by the larger

dealers; we coax them from the cupboards of patient grandmothers and spinster aunts; we palpitate for them at auction sales; we amass them by hook or by crook, and then suffer righteous pangs until our treasures are duly displayed before the gaze of envious friends! There is no limit to the range of our tea-tray collections: they embrace Davenport and Longwy, Crown Derby and Mings, Tôkiyô and Dresden, Minton, Spode and Copeland, Sèvres and Etruria. Cups and saucers of every age and family meet together in the symposia of to-day. And sweeter far than honey of Hymettus is the draught of Chinese nectar sipped by a collector in the sight of her china-loving friends, from a fragile cup of which she knows no duplicate!

Upon the five o'clock tea-table, this dainty equipage of porcelain is supplemented by one as rare and rich, in silver. If you have inherited an old English service, glittering white, and hammered into charming shapes of by-gone art, so much the better. Marshal in array, as only a woman's fingers can, the cheerful, hissing urn, the tea-pot with queer little old-time strainer hanging to the spout, the liberal dish of sugar-lumps, the slender jug (bearing in mind here, Dr. Holmes' two sprightly maxims: "Cream is thicker than water," and "Large heart never loved little cream-pot"), the sugar-tongs—thin, graceful, lustrous, with golden claws—the spoons attenuated through years of honorable service and sporting half-obliterated crests. Forget not the tea-caddy, modern or antique, an article on which fashion just now lavishes much extravagance. Nor omit the porcelain platters bearing wafer-like slices of buttered bread, cakelets, and, if you would be thoroughly English, a shape of hot buttered bread, not unlike old-fashioned Sally Lunn.

For the tea-tables used—happy if you possess an immor-

tal Chippendale—you may yet rest content with the expanse of a ruddy, old, spindle-shanked Santo Domingo mahogany of colonial days, claw-footed and polished to a lustre which reflects the flickering shapes of a hickory fire in Walpurgis dance. The new folding tea-table in ebonized wood, with leaves that let down when not in use, is most convenient; and the many square and trefoil tables, scattered about modern drawing-rooms, are employed to hold a cup at the elbow, perchance, of some nervous or emphatic guest, to whom is tremblingly consigned the egg-shell treasures of the hostess.

The tea-cloth is a subject for profound consideration! It may be used to cover either tray or table, and is commonly a square of virgin linen, fringed with lovely drawn-work borders, or with a Japanese design of fans, vases and tea-cups, outlined in fine blue filoselle around the edge—or else is worked all over with sprays of forget-me-not, cyclamen, honeysuckle, etc., in finest crewel stitchery.

Group around this central point a few comfortable chairs —a "Market Harborough" with gay cushions and cardinal satin bows—or an "Oxford," with square low seat; draw up that quaint mahogany settle with the delicately carved back and plush cushion, silver-gray with age—light and graceful, yet substantial enough to rob sitting down of all its terrors to the stout; kindle the soft stars of candle-light on sconce and mantel-shelf; put a crimson shade over the too brilliant lamp near by; permit your wood-fire to sink into the *pétillant* stage upon the tiled hearth; set afloat the breath of fresh-plucked violets in your room—and last, not least, see that "the kettle boiling be."

This will complete the spell lingering around that enchanted spot—the five o'clock tea-table.

Orange-Blossoms on a Tea-Cloth.

One of the prettiest bits of tea-table luxury ever displayed by the Society of Decorative Art, was a tea-cloth of creamy linen two yards long and one wide, the ends richly ornamented with bands of drawn-work and fringe. At either end, squares were indicated upon the linen by a delicate arabesque of gold-colored filoselle. Across these squares strayed graceful boughs of oranges with flowers and foliage outlined in soft grays, greens and yellows. This needlework, intended for a bridal gift, received the seal of the society, bestowed only upon specimens of unusual merit in design and execution. Inscribed in antique letters upon the cloth, the suggestive motto ran:

"Take only such cups as leave a friendly warmth."

Queen Charlotte Tea-Table.

A new table for five o'clock tea has been introduced to the devotees of that beverage in England, which has, to loyal eyes, a double charm, in that it was copied from an original belonging to one Queen, and is "graciously sanctioned" by another. A porcelain tray, with tea-set to match, of Queen Charlotte's time, is made to rest upon a stand of ebony and gilt, so well balanced and running so easily on castors, that it may be rolled from spot to spot in the drawing-room without fear of upsetting. Between the four supporting pillars of the base, a jug for hot water may be placed. The first one of these tables made was presented to Queen Victoria, at Windsor.

It is difficult to conjure up a vision of tea-drinking ease in connection with stiff little Queen Charlotte, who stood herself, and kept all her ladies standing, victims to etiquette, until they fairly fainted from fatigue; let us hope poor Fanny Burney and her fellow-sufferers in that dreary court enjoyed the occasional relaxation of an hour by such a table as this, where, as Thackeray says, they might "cackle over their tea" in comfort!

Trefoil Tables.

Although no longer new, these tables are still used to hold odds and ends of China in the drawing-room. One of them, covered with dark blue stamped velvet, had a deep fall of large-patterned Irish crochet lace; a band of velvet around the upper edge was secured by ornamental gilt-headed nails. The lace should have been lined with blue, to produce a rich effect.

Five O'clock Tea-Table in Squares of Plush and Lace.

A tea-table exhibited by the Society of Decorative Art, had a cover of pomegranate plush squares embroidered with pale blue silk and crewel sprays, alternating with squares of guipure d'art, closely broidered down with overlapping stitches of green crewel. The legs of the low, square frame were covered with pomegranate plush, and the top was bordered with a fall of guipure d'art. "Beautiful, but not useful," was the comment of admiring housekeepers, with a shudder at thought of the audacious male guest, who might, and probably would, unhesitatingly deposit a cup and moist saucer upon the top.

A "Two Story" Lamp-Table, at a Small Cost.

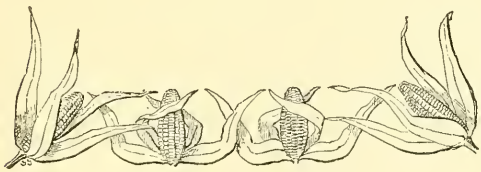
One of those convenient lamp-tables, with a shelf underneath to contain books or magazines, was added to her sitting-room by an economically disposed young woman, who, finding that great desideratum, a cheap carpenter, had a rather high, substantial pine frame made by him for 75 cents. Four yards of olive-green stamped velveteen at $1.00 a yard were used to cover it, a piece of work neatly and successfully accomplished by the owner with the aid of only a hammer and a paper of tacks. Two strips of velveteen lined with silesia were somewhat dashingly decorated with sunflowers and leaves in *appliqué* work—couched down with crewels—the petals cut from mandarin yellow cloth, the leaves from two shades of green cloth contrasting with the background. The lower edge of these strips was simply turned in with the lining, and left untrimmed; then the strips were tacked around the top on the wrong side and turned over, also around the lower shelf, including the legs already covered with the green velveteen. The result was a lamp-table in the latest fashion. The same idea was carried out in chintz for a bedside-table.

A Blue Lunch Party.

Not an assemblage of blue-stockings was this entertainment, as the name might indicate—but a fashionable mid-day meal given in an aristocratic house in London, to celebrate the eighteenth birthday of the oldest daughter—cited in illustration of the fancies of the day.

"The cloth had a blue and white embroidered border to

match the white porcelain service, which was marked with the owner's name in blue ; the serviettes were trimmed with *point de Vénise ;* even the knife-handles matched the china, and were blue and white, the little salad-plates were silver-gilt, inlaid with turquoises. And the young lady in whose honor the fête was given was in blue also ; her short costume of pale Indian blue cashmere, was made with a coat-shaped bodice of black striped velvet, her Marquise waistcoat of blue satin embroidered with a Pompadour garland of flowers, the jabot and sleeve-ruffles of old Mechlin lace."



DECORATIONS OF THE DINNER-TABLE.

IT is impossible for the average female mind to confront unmoved the delightful possibilities to-day afforded by the service of the dinner-table. Times have changed since the mistress of a household was wont to set before her guests a feast like the day-dream of Ichabod Crane, where "the pigeons were snugly put to bed in a comfortable pie and tucked in with a coverlet of crust, the geese swimming in their own gravy, and the ducks pairing cozily in dishes, like snug married couples, with a decent competency of onion-sauce." The now universal dîner à la Russe, with airy hints, suggestions, innuendoes of ministry to the appetite, has limited each course to one dish offered at a time, with attendant sauce or vegetable.

Giving a dinner-party in the country in by-gone days, for instance, what labor did it not entail? The ladies of the family spent hours in the seclusion of store-room or pantry, with curls tucked up, and ribbons obscured by a gingham apron, while weighing, measuring, egg-beating, almond-blanching, icing, garnishing, seasoning, tasting and gossiping—all this, and much more, till the lavish banquet "stood confest" before the eyes of twenty hungry guests who had driven over miles of winter-bound roads, to be punctual at the hour of two P.M.!

Modern degeneracy has materially lessened the labor of hospitality. The modern chatelaine bids her guests, and consults with her cook—then abandons all concern. In a

well-ordered city establishment, the cares of entertaining are comparatively light. And this state of things is by no means to be found exclusively in the household most liberally endowed with wealth and most abundantly equipped with servants.

To deprive a woman of a due amount of personal painstaking in the preparation for her guests, would be to rob her of one of the chief enjoyments of hospitality. The adjustment of rooms and furniture, the arrangement of flowers, is hers. Though the work of setting silver, crystal and steel upon the cloth, may be done by a trained servant, there are last touches no hand but hers may give.

An hour before the coming of the guests, you may behold a sylph in trailing Watteau gown of cashmere, with saucy little bows, glide into the dining-room and hover around her board. There are wreaths of smilax to be trailed over piles of rosy fruit, and flowers to be grouped in studied carelessness beside each plate; dinner-cards and the mighty question of places to be settled; bonbons, little cakes and crystallized fruit to be arranged. Lamps and candles must be passed in review, the temperature of the room regulated, screens set and *portières* drawn for the comfort of the company—then a word of admonition to the servants, about the warmth of the soup and the chill of oysters, before the mistress vanishes into her dressing-room, soon to reappear and take her place, watchful, gracious yet unconscious, as hostess of the feast.

The rigid forms of Eastlake's Jacobean table are common now, despite the remonstrance of old dinner-givers, who claim there is no shape so comfortable, so sociable or so attractive as the perfect round.

Until recently, table-cloths have been restricted to an ornament arising merely from the gloss obtained by various distributions of the warp and woof, in weaving. The specimens of British and Saxony table-damask are satin-like in texture. But from Dresden has now come a table-cloth, quite new in conception, representing a dance of cupids amid garlands of flowers, encircling the centre-piece.

And the profluent tide of color has invaded even this stainless snow. In Germany, in 1872, table-cloths were made, imitating the Renaissance linen, and bearing a familiar design of the Royal Meissen China—the Zwiebelmuster or onion-pattern, in colored borders. Since then, scarlet and blue reappear in monogram and crest, with traceries in arabesque wrought by hand upon the damask.

A table-cover, with napkins and side-board cloth, has been made with a broidery of scarlet poppies, wrought in washing cottons, interwoven with mottoes in German text.

Variety, thus laid upon the corner-stone of the dinner-table, appears throughout. The changes are kaleidoscopic and bewildering. You take your soup in Sèvres, your entrées in England, and so on, till you come to fruit and coffee, in China and Japan. It is like a "voyage around the world in eighty"—minutes. The correct affectation with connoisseurs in ceramics is to reverse the plate set before them, and study the marks subscribed, with an air of inscrutable wisdom. But avoid the catastrophe which befell an absent-minded man not long ago, who, forgetting that he had just been helped, turned over his plate, bestowing a "bouchée à la reine" upon the satin lap of the lady next to him.

The use of heavy silver pieces has been generally superseded by pretty bits of glass and porcelain containing flowers. This fashion is in reality an economy, as any lady may select from her cabinet or mantel-shelf, a Venice jug, a Doulton or a Minton vase, or a tiny iridescent bulb of glass, and group her own flowers, without resorting to the costly aid of the florist. For bouquets offered at each plate, come horn-shaped holders in Italian straw, flat baskets to suspend by ribbons from the waist, and horse-shoes made of violets, to use in similar fashion.

A phase of the dessert at a recent dinner may prove suggestive, especially as the general effect resulted more from a harmonious assembling of colors, than from lavish display of wealth. The centre-piece was a glowing mass of scarlet poinsettia and white japonicas, the latter cut with long stems and having glossy dark-green foliage. Side-dishes at dessert, finger-bowls and ice-cream plates, were ruby Bohemian glass. The doyleys were etched with red silk in tiny Japanese designs. The candelabra used were clear crystal, with bobèches of ruby glass, and the red wax candles had each a little jaunty cap, or shade, of scarlet silk. The sparkle of fire-light and candle-light over all, recalled the impression produced upon Jane Eyre by the drawing-room of Thornfield, "a general blending of snow and fire."

It should be quite a consolation to our country friends, who have so long been sighing for the luxury of gas, that candles again play a prominent part in the household. The old-fashioned double-branched, silver-plated candelabra, now eagerly sought in the bric-a-brac shops, and bought at the price of $40 a pair, are very much in vogue, and those people are fortunate who possess antique

candlesticks in genuine silver. Dining-room candelabra should be set upon the table, or upon mantel-shelf and side-board. There is no artificial light so becoming as the mild, unwavering lustre of lamp or candle.

A Couleur de Rose Dinner.

The decorations at a recent London dinner-party have been thus described: "All the ornaments on the table were of plain white Sèvres, but lovely in shape and finish. Even the candelabra were white Sèvres figures. The flowers used were pink and white roses, heaths and carnations, charmingly arranged in baskets of different designs. There was no fruit on the table, only pink and white bonbons and small cakes in shell-shaped dishes; all the set china pieces stood on round rose-colored velvet stands about an inch and a half high; the candles had small pink silk shades; and even the wine-glasses that were not clear crystal were of lovely pink and white Venetian glass with twisted stems. All the china used throughout dinner was of white and gold Sèvres, with rose-colored dessert-plates, and the dinner cards were to match."

Of course the hostess must have been a bit of "pink and white tyranny," to be in keeping with her fairy feast.

"Old Blue" and Early Jonquils.

At a spring dinner in New York, an oblong of amber-tinted silk covered with Eastern embroidery was laid in the centre of the cloth. A Chinese bowl of rare "Old Blue," placed in the middle of this, was filled with cluster-

ing masses of yellow jonquils. Grouped about the table, here and there, the amber tint reappeared in Maréchal Neil roses. The dessert was served in dishes of Oriental porcelain ; and a magnificent platter of Chinese blue, before the hostess, held little baskets, one for each guest, heaped with glowing hot-house strawberries, meant, in due season, to be taken, caps on, between finger and thumb and to be eaten after dipping them one at a time in powdered sugar—the royal way to treat strawberries, if people did but know it !

The Centre-Piece and Dessert.

Ponderous épergnes—one always connects them with poor Colonel Newcome's "superb silver cocoanut-tree, whereof the leaves were dexterously arranged for holding candles and pickles," which so tempted the cupidity of the awful old "Campaigner"—are happily out of date.

At a ceremonious entertainment, it is customary to use a bank of flowers for the central ornament, composed of bouquets, afterwards detached and presented each to a lady upon leaving the table ; bouquets formed severally of Jacqueminot, Bonselline, Cornelia Cook, Maréchal Neil and Gloire de Paris roses, or of violets, lilies of the valley and white lilac. This luxurious dispensation of hot-house flowers is, however, quite beyond the range of an ordinary purse, and the housewife must bring her skill and taste to bear in planning a substitute. As before suggested, a china bowl—the one which has come down to you from grandmother's cupboard-shelf, cracked and riveted, yet able, with the friendly aid of smilax or geranium leaves, to put a best side foremost—may be

filled with a few handfuls of cut flowers and flanked with low, shell-shaped dishes of fruit, or with the china baskets one is almost always sure of finding in the same old-time receptacle. Add to this array, one or two cut-glass dishes filled with ruby ginger or preserves, to catch the light and send it shooting back from their glittering facets, and your table will not fail to tempt the eye as well as palate. We have not thought it necessary to suggest that the table-cloth be spotless and unstarched, that every article of glass, of silver, of steel or porcelain displayed upon it be shining with purity and arranged with nicest care.

Where flowers are not to be procured, fruit, piled on a silver dish or in a porcelain basket, makes a goodly show in the centre. Oranges, white and purple grapes, apples polished to bring out their ruddiness, California pears and pretty little lady-apples, provide all the color one can ask. Since it has become so much the custom to arrange the dessert upon the cloth at the beginning of a meal, small odd dishes, shells and platters, are used to contain biscuits in neat piles, little cakes, nuts, olives, figs, prunes and bonbons, grouped about the table—leaving only the ices, pudding, or whatever is the "plat sucré" chosen, to fall into ranks after the cloth is brushed. It is no longer necessary that these small dishes should match, or form part of a set. They are employed as the fancy of the moment seems to dictate, as are small vases of crystal, silver or Venice glass, each holding a cluster of flowers or, it may be, a single rose-bud, scattered about the damask.

Some people have an oval jardinière in beaten brass, planted with growing ferns, for the centre-piece: and a cache-pot in earthenware or porcelain may be decorated by

hand for the same purpose. We have seen a cottage-table made beautiful during an entire summer by continually replenishing a cheap faïence bowl with wild flowers. In early June, there were masses of daisies and buttercups set in pale green spiky ferns; in July, the flush of wild roses, field lilies with their red velvet stamens, and meadow-grass—pink wild-raspberry blossoms, alder, clematis; then rudbeckia and wild parsnip—and so on, through every season, till October came with golden-rod and aster. If you have but a single cluster of violets bought of a street-vender, loosen them and put them in a tiny vase to give fragrance to your meal.

American finger-bowls and ice-cream plates, at $9 a dozen each, are made at the Sandwich factory in Massachusetts, to which we have learned to look for much of the best ornamental ware of domestic manufacture. These specimens are in clear blue, red or white, while some have the Venetian line or thread pattern, like those made in England by Salviati.

Table-Mirrors.

Round and oval mirrors of all sizes can be had to adorn the dinner-table. Those with bevelled edges are prettiest. An oval mirror has been laid in the centre of the cloth, and around it fitted flower-troughs, filled with rosebuds, stephanotis, etc., with smilax. Swans of royal Worcester ware, and of Venetian glass, holding flowers, swam upon the surface of this mimic lake.

Modern Dresden Ware.

A dessert service in modern German ware, imitating old Dresden, has for centre-piece Cupid bestriding a swan, whom he drives with chains of forget-me-nots. Flower- and fruit-baskets, with candelabra, complete the set.

Cut-Glass.

For solid elegance and limpid brilliancy, this aristocratic ware has no rival. The square platters for ice-cream, the massive bowls and glittering decanters, must always command high prices. Bric-a-brac dealers have hunted up old cut-glass decanters, bowls and dishes and custard cups, which they exhibit in numbers.

Modern Venice Glass.

Among dinner-table adornments, there is nothing more seductive to the housekeeper than this glass, now imported at prices putting within reach of a modest purse reproductions of such treasures as the small dish with the Strozzi arms of Mantua in smalto, for which, Mr. Jarves tells us, a noble Florentine paid, recently, one thousand francs. "It neither rusts nor grows old," says this connoisseur, writing of Venetian glass; "moths cannot consume it, nor time tarnish its colors or consume its frolicsome forms. But, like all exquisite and perfect things to be found in this hard stage of being, it needs the greatest care to prolong its existence, for the slightest mishap may crush it as easily as a blow a butterfly's wing. In Venetian glass there is no midway

æsthetic phase between perfect condition and absolute ruin."

Thanks to Dr. Antonio Salviati, a native of Verona, who has introduced into England in recent years a revival of the noble glass-work of Murano, we are supplied with numerous specimens of a craft, of all others offering widest scope for creations of enchanting form and color, conveyed from the artisan's brain to his work with the speed of thought. The famous old shapes, the airy nothings of patrician Venice table-ware in the Middle Ages, are ours, now, for a mere song. There are the *millefiori*, in which sections of rod-glass are imbedded in a different-colored ground. The *latticino*, with graceful milk-white spirals. The *avventurino*, with the lustre of pure gold. Crackle, with an iridescent glow like opal. And in these varieties may be had claret-jugs, champagne *tazze*, mugs, vases, tumblers, wine-glasses, finger-bowls, carafes, bobèches, in indescribably beautiful shapes. The double gourd used by Italians for oil and vinegar, is a favorite vase. There are beakers threaded with lines of colored glass, and studded with bosses of glass like jewels; bowls shaped like a lily-cup, of bubble filagree, a film-like surface, specked with air-bubbles; and vases with intertwisted stems, expanding into the blossom of a convolvulus, and seemingly as frail.

Bohemian Glass.

The modern Bohemian ware fully sustains its world-wide reputation for glowing color and richness of enamel. For side-board decoration, the Wiederkom or "come again" drinking-cups in emerald-hued glass, have been always popular, as also the ruby jugs and beakers elaborately

enamelled with royal coats-of-arms, heraldic designs and mythological subjects. But to Graf Schorfgotsch, a Bohemian nobleman of talent and enterprise, we are indebted for the recent outpouring of a beautiful product of manufactories established by him upon his own estates. Every frequenter of New York shops has seen the brilliant specimens of crackle-glass in amber, golden-smoke, aquamarine and green, enamelled with designs of sea-weeds, lobsters, fish, coral and shells. The ice-bowls and water-jugs of this ware immediately became favorites for table use, while, for merely decorative purposes, the variety seemed endless.

The latest importations of Bohemian crackle-glass have more delicate ornamentation of field-flowers, grasses, ferns, etc., to replace the favorite aquatic designs. For dessert uses, there are pretty shells of aquamarine blue, unornamented, at from 65 cents each to $2.65. The same, enamelled, at about double the price.

French Enamelled Glass in Colors.

The factories of Jean at Sèvres send out superb specimens resembling the Bohemian glass. In clear tints, the surface brought to a dazzling polish, their designs of birds and flowers are enamelled with exquisite delicacy and purity of color. Dishes for fruit and flowers, vases of graceful contour, pitchers and drinking-goblets may be procured in deep ruby red, in sapphire blue, in bottle green, topaz and a sort of golden brown, brought out by setting it against a dark velvet background.

Bombay Striped Glass.

During the Prince of Wales's late visit to India, he was attracted by a native blue and pinkish-red glass with spiral stripes of white. Vases and jugs of this ware, carried home by him, were copied in England; and some beautiful specimens have been sold here.

Modern English Glass

May be dismissed in a brief paragraph, for all the world knows the work of the Stourbridge factories. It is a revelation of the refined art attainable by skilled workers in crystal. Individual water-jugs, ice-bowls for the centre of the table, glasses for claret, champagne, hock, liqueur or sherry, finger-bowls and bobèches, engraved like frost-work, are to be had of this ware in inexhaustible variety.

Canton and Copeland—Minton's Plates.

Before leaving the subject of dinner and dessert decoration, we would add a few hints as to the present possibilities of New York, in the matter of inexpensive table-china.

The large dealers advise, for moderate purses, the purchase of blue Canton china of the willow pattern, well known to all of us, and in most cases pleasantly associated with many a cherished memory of childhood. The turn of Fashion's wheel has brought this ware up again, and the Chinese manufacturers are shipping it in large quantities to America. The price is little beyond that of plain white china, and the effect, from an artist's point of view, immeasurably superior.

"I love the men's faces," writes Charles Lamb, anent blue china, "and the women, if possible, with still more womanish expressions. Here is a young and courtly mandarin, handing tea to a lady from a salver—two miles off. See how distance seems to set off respect! And here the same lady—or another, for likeness is identity on tea-cups—is stepping into a little fairy boat, moored on the hither side of this calm garden river, with a dainty mincing foot, which in a right angle of incidence (as angles go in our world) must infallibly land her in the midst of a flowery mead, a furlong off on the other side of the same strange stream!"

If, however, you prefer to depart from following in the ways of your fathers and adopt something more modern, there are varieties of Staffordshire ware to be had at reasonable rates.

Minton's "botanical" plates, upon translucent porcelain, are charming at $7 the dozen. The designs are flowers, with roots, leaves and blossoms, the names affixed upon a tiny scroll.

The Copeland cream-ware is an especial favorite. A full lunch-set, including as many as eighty-six pieces, with designs successfully repeating the flower patterns of old Staffordshire, may be bought as low as $35. This, as a reinforcement to the "French white" perhaps already encumbering your closet-shelves, will go a great way toward supplying the variety you dream of.

A dessert set of Copeland cream-ware, two compotiers and twelve plates, octagon or round, with fluted edges and a gay chintz pattern of flowers in red or blue, costs $6 for the whole.

Small plates for tea or dessert, in Thuringian ware, imi-

tating old Dresden, closely covered with a rich, deep-colored design, are to be bought at $12 the dozen.

We may glance at the exquisite beauties of Minton's famous table-porcelain. A fish set, painted by Mussill, Minton's great workman, has a succession of surprises, each plate differently representing the varieties of fishes, brilliant in color and instinct with life, darting under the "glassy, cool, translucent" surface of the water. From Mussill's brush there are also dessert-plates, rare and fine, where orchids glow and jewel-winged humming-birds hover over them. To the amateur china-painter, such work as this is at once a revelation and a despair. From such specimens, down to those of more moderate value, Minton's porcelain is all distinguished by the perfection of manipulation in decoration, as well as by the transparent quality of the ware.

Oriental China.

We subjoin a list of prices for dessert china, taken from one of the leading Japanese shops in New York, for the benefit of those bereft, by years of breakage and neglect, of the patrimonial treasures in Lowestoft, Chinese, Wedgewood or English cream ware, to which, otherwise, they might proudly have recourse.

A Kutani bowl, in soft blue and red, at $3. An Arita bowl, gorgeous with stippled red, at $5. A Wakayama bowl in pale yellow—decorated outside with a checker-work of black and copper, and with arabesque designs of pale green and silver; inside, with a band of red, on which are black and gold dragons—is so beautiful in color and design that one wonders at being asked to pay the moder-

ate price of only $15 for it. This ware, so decorated, has also the merit of novelty, the dealers having introduced it only recently into this country. A smaller bowl like this for $12. To contain conserved fruit, nuts, cakes, etc., there are dishes quaintly shaped like fishes and birds, glowing with color, at from $1.25 to $1.50 each, two sizes.

For ice-cream, puddings or moulds of jelly, etc., there are two sizes of platters in Arita ware, surprisingly rich and effective, at $2.50 and $4 each.

There are numberless grotesque but pretty bits, any of which serve for *hors d'œuvres* on the table, especially the gourd-shaped dishes at 75 cents each, or the blue curled-over china leaves at the same price.

Dessert-plates, in any ware or color desired, may be bought at prices ranging from $12 to $18 per dozen, also most lovely semi-transparent after-dinner coffee-cups, in red and gold, or blue, at about the same rates. These cups are offered for your inspection, nestled upon a small tray of lacquered metal, where dark blues and greens and reds are blended in artistic arabesque—a tray to entice the housekeeper beyond power of resistance, for which the price asked is $2.75.

In this connection it may be well to recall Mr. Prime's advice to purchasers: "A very simple rule for the guidance of those who wish to have their tables admired, is to avoid in successive courses the endless repetition of the same services. Have a number of sets of plates, and use a different set for each course. Then buy plates no two of which are alike except in shape, and thus make harlequin services to vary the entertainment. The importers are always ready to supply such varieties. The most delicious after-dinner coffee services that eyes ever

rested on can be made up by choosing the exquisite cups and saucers of Copeland, Minton, Worcester or other English factories, in a dozen shades of color, making a collection which, when standing on a tray, is as gay as a bouquet of flowers."

It is customary to serve coffee in these dainty cups just before the ladies leave the table, the pouring out accomplished by servants at a side-table ; but recently a fashion has been revived of allowing each guest to help himself from a *cafetière*—one of Kirk's long and slender-necked vessels of hammered silver, or one of Tiffany's in rare niello-work. This has the double merit of displaying an otherwise hidden treasure, and of keeping the clear, black nectar hot !

Having now conducted our readers to the exact point of diurnal experience when the heart of man is supposed to glow with most charitable warmth toward his fellow-being, we entrust to their courteous consideration the suggestions here assembled.

INDEX.

AFTER dinner coffee cups, 234
Mr. Prime's advice, 234
trays on which to serve, 234
cafetières, 235
Alford, Lady Marian, Vice-President R. S. Art Needlework, 44
Appliqué, 58
Aprons, embroidered, 201
Arabian rose-work, 15
Arrasene, 55
Art Interchange, Supply Department, 51
prize competitions, 126
Art Needlework, Royal School of, 3
Associated Artists, Louis C. Tiffany, 5
Azaleas, American, on portière, 67

BAGS and sachets, 202
Banner screen—owls in council, 205
from Society of Decorative Art, 159
made up at home, 76
Baskets for bonnets, 208
dressing-room, 209
Bedroom, the, 141
Bedroom furniture designed by McKim, 141
Bell-pulls, Queen Anne, 196
Bennett, John, 106
Berlin worsted work, 22
Bigelow, Mr. William, his Old Colony Interiors, 142
Book shelves and brackets, 139
Burden stitch, 25

CABINETS by Chippendale or Adam, 142
Caffaggiolo lustre, 104
Canon Rock on textiles, 7, 40, 58
Canton and Copeland, 231
Carpet thrums used as crewels, 4
Carter, Mrs. Susan N., 13
Cashmere shawls in decoration, 167
Catacombs, hunting for lace in, 38
Chairs, Louis XV., 190
Cromwell, 191
Chinese bamboo, 191
Market Harborough, 192
Shaker, 192
Wakefield rattan, 193
Chimney corner, an artistic, 174
Chinese glaze in decoration, 104
Chromatics, liberty in, 11
Color, conventional, 10
Colors, English mineral, in powder, 102
Conventional ornament, 15
Cook, Clarence, on household decorative art, 135
Copeland cream ware, 232
Copenhagen, cut-work still sold in, 88
Cover for library table, 203
Crewels, silks, etc., 55
Crib cover with motto, 207
blanket, 207
Curtain, drop, at Madison Square Theatre, 5
Curtains, thin for drawing-room, 186
in Madras muslin, 187
in muslin and lace, 187
in écru scrym, 188

Curtain, in strainer cloth, 188
embroidered mull, 189
silk rag, 200
Cutwork, 88

DACCA silk, 56

Deck, his conventional coloring, 10
specimens of ware, 106
Decorated Palettes, 123
Decoration, Japanese, elegance of, 186
Decorative Art, Society of, 4
Decorative Art, theoretical, 10–17
Delft plaque, 104, 171
Deshilado, or "work on ravelling," 79, 80
Designs already stamped on material, 51
Design, quaint books of, 86–89
Dining-room, the, 140
Dinner, a Couleur de Rose, 224
table decoration, 220
cloth, 222
service, 222
dessert, 223
lights, 224
flowers and fruit, 225
growing plants, 226
centre pieces, 225
Donkey-bag fauteuils, 142
Doors, draped and decorated, 177
with stencil decoration, 179
with design painted in oils, 180
for nursery, 181
Dower chests, Spanish and Italian, 142
Drawing, necessity of correct, 16, 69
Drawn work, old and new, 78
Drawn work from Quito, Ecuador, 82
Dresser's Principles of Design—wall papers, 138
Dressing table, Duchesse, 210
Drouot, Rue, sales in, 149

EMBROIDERY, Greek needlework, 6
of Paolo da Verona, 7
first steps in, 11
Embroidery, designing for, 17
hand tapestries of Venice and Florence in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, 21
old time sampler work, 21
work of Mary Queen of Scots, 21
Persian, Cretan, Algerian, German and Russian cross stitch embroideries, 22, 23
bed-hanging design by Morris, 24
Earl Spencer's wall tapestry, 25
embroidered deshilado, 25
Queen Anne darned work, 26
priest's vestments from Seville, 27
"the Heart of June," 28
Spanish, Cretan, and Italian couching, 29
old Turkish work in floss, 30
table-cover from Gallipoli, 31
Portuguese bed-cover in floss, 31
Spanish altar frontal, 32
reposteros, 32
antique Indian work on blue damask, 32
Queen Elizabeth's garters, 32
Dugdale's list of vestments, 33
Renaissance convent embroidery in crewel, 34
altar cloth belonging to Marchioness of Bute, 36
peach-blossom silk, Chinese embroidery, 37
the Syon cope, 40
chain stitch in Germany, Spain, Portugal, England. Quilt belonging to Archbishop of Toledo. Quilt belonging to Mr. Herter, 41
tambour work of Colonial belles, 42
of Marie Antoinette's time, 42
tambour work in Tashkent, Turkestan, 42
twisted chain, or Charles II. stitch, 43
wardrobe accounts of Queen Bess, 43
point russe, 43
Holbein stitch, 44

Embroidery, opus anglicum, 44
crewel work, time of the Stuarts, 45
Rhenish needlework, 58
appliqué embroideries of Venice and Southern Germany, 59
French court train of the olden time embroidered, 59
Venetian cinque-cento appliqué, 60
old Milanese damask, 61
reposteros with appliqués of gold and silver cloth, 61
cord and cockle-shell of France, 63
table-cover in peach-bloom satin, 64
wall panels from Paris, 64
curtains designed by Princess Louise, 64
revival of old Venetian appliqué worked by the Royal School of Art Needlework for Lady Ashburton, 65
appliqué plushes from Mr. Tiffany's atelier, 66
clematis on olive satin from the Society of Decorative Art, 154
embroidery taught by letter, 157
Mr. Colman's curtain, by the Society of Decorative Art, 163
embroideries by Mrs. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., 184
embroidered cushions for Cromwell chair, 192
embroidered covers for Shaker chairs, 193
embroidered tea tables, 217
Chinese stippled, 39
stuffed, 75
treatment of, when finished, 75
Emmet, Miss Rosina, 111, 125
"Etching" on linen, 126

FAN painting, 117

Fans in decoration, Japanese and Chinese, 182
Faïence, Bourg la Reine, 5
Henri Deux, 104
Faïence, Hungarian, 105
Limoges, 106
modern Italian, 105
Swiss, 105
Filoselle, 55
Fireplace curtains, 175
Flanders, flower painters of, 34
Flaxman, outline designs from Greek and Roman mythology, 69
Floors, how to deal with them, 138
Flora, Greek, 15
Frames and Framing, 56
Friezes, 6, 66, 75, 123
Fringes for needlework, 57
Furnishing, how to begin, 139
Furniture, Japanese lacquered, 185
Queen Anne, Chippendale, Sheraton and Adams, 141

GARDEN party, umbrellas for, 200
Georgian forms in decoration, 13
Georgian era, tables of the, 130
Gibbons, Grinling and his contemporaries, 145
Gien ware, 196
Glaister, Elizabeth, 165
Glass, cut, 229
modern Venice, 228
Bohemian, 229
French enamelled, 230
Bombay striped, 231
modern English, 231
Gold in textiles and embroidery, 52
Gold thread, etc., 54
Gouache, 115
Grisaille, 118

HANGINGS for wall of young lady's bedroom, 70
Hispano-Moresco lustre ware, 104

ILLUMINATED MSS., Jean Foucquet, 16
romaunt of the rose, 125
fifteenth century work on, 125

India silks woven in Connecticut, 43
Indian stuffs and enamels, 15
Industry, the Pelham, 23
Irish lace makers, 94

KAKEMONOS, Japanese, 183

Kiln, troubles with, 102
Mrs. Nichols', 110
Kirk, hammered silver by, 235
Koran, extract from the, 15

LACES, point and pillow (Mrs. Bury Pallisser), 92
Lace macramé, 90
Lacroix mineral colors, 101
tube colors of, 102
Lama d'oro, of Italy, 52
Lambrequin for mantel, 203
Lamp table, at small cost, 218
Lamps, candles, shades, 196
Lampas, Persian flowered silk, 177
Living room, the, 139
Longwy ware, 196
Lucknow, gold embroidered velvets of, 53
Luncheon, a blue, 218

MANTEL-PIECE, decoration of, 169
old marble, 139
Mantel valance, embroidered, 172
Marquetry, time of William and Mary, 142
McLaughlin, Miss, 108
Menus and dinner cards, 124
Metropolitan Museum of Art, Turkish work at the, 31
embroideries at the, 39
drawn work at the, 82
punto a maglia at the, 86
illuminations at the, 126
collection of laces at the, 94
Minnesota, Swedish lace makers in, 96
Minton ware, 233
revival of old majolica, 104
Minton ware, Solon's pâte-sur-pâte, 104
botanical plates, 232
dessert plates, 233
Mirrors on table, 227
Modern Dresden ware, 228
Montagu, Lady Mary Wortley, visit to the Sultana Hafiten, 53
Montelupo ware, 104
Morocco, linen drawn-work from, 82
Morris, designs for bed-hanging, 24
cloth for embroidery, 152
paper-hangings, 136
Kidderminster carpets, 139
Mosaic glass for window-screens, 144
Mosul, old fabrics of, 54
Muslins, Indian, embroidered with beetle wings, 54
Mussill, his paintings on porcelain, 233
Mt. Desert, Indian baskets from, 199

NEEDLE-WORK, decorative, in England and America, 3
Nichols, Mrs. Geo. W., 110

OLD blue and jonquils, 224

Oriental china for dessert, Kutani bowls, 233
Wakayama bowl, 233
Arita ware, 234
Organ-screen at Cincinnati, carved by women, 148
Outline work, 69
Owen Jones, 136

PAINTING on brown paper, 120
on gilded canvas, 122
on linen in water-colors, 120
on mirrors, 122
on porcelain, 99
on pottery underglaze, 103
on plush with oils, 119
on sateen with water-colors, 119

Painting on silk or satin with oils, 118
on silk or satin with water-colors, 115
on tapestry, 121
on wood with water-colors, 129
Panel for music room by Mr. E. Burne Jones, 73
Panel painting, 128
Peacock's feathers, appliqué, 156
Persian art, best lessons in decorative coloring drawn from, 12
Persian love of flowers, 16
Philippine Islands, work on grass, 79
Piano decoration and drapery, 176
Pianos, covers for grand, 177
Pin cushions, 209
Plaques, suggestions for, 113
Plushes, the reign of, 47
appliqué to represent fruits, 66
Portières, their origin and uses, 160
suggestions for, 164
Portière by Mr. Colman, 163
for hall, 162
Prime, William C., service of Chinese porcelain, 10
advice to purchasers, 235
Pugin, hints on fringes, 57
Punto Tirato, or Italian drawn-work, 81
Purse work bags, 206

RACINET, extracts from "Ornement Polychrome," 13
Randa, or Spanish darned netting, 86
Ribbon work, 155
Rugs, American, Smyrna, or Merzapore, 138
oriental and American, 138

SAFFRON ruffs, the Couleur Isabelle, 50
Salviati, glassware by, 229
Screens and their uses, 149
examples of embroidered, 154
Shoe bags and boxes, 209
Slippers, Cinderella's, 198
Sofa cushion, in appliqué, 194
in matelassé, 206
Solon's pâte-sur-pâte, 104
Southern needlework, 22–80
Spanish Moors, bas-relief ornamentation of, 53
Splash curtains, 208
St. Augustine, Florida, nun's work from, 80
Stitches, ancient and modern, 20–45
Stocking texture of old continental workers, 28
Stuffs used for furniture coverings, 143
screens, 152
portières, 165
Japanese, in New York, 185
Sumptuary laws of King Henry VIII., 49
of Napoleon I., 54

TABLES, hand-painted, 130
for dinner, 221
Tapestry, imitation of, 121
Tea-cloth, nursery, 204
in teacup time, 215
orange-blossoms, 216
Tea-lovers, 212
tables, 214, 216, 217, 218
cloth, 215
Tea-screens by Walter Crane and by Miss Wheeler, 158
Textiles used for embroidery, 46
Teak, Indian, 142
Thuringian ware, 232
Tidies, 195
Tiffany & Co., niello-work, 235
Tiles in decoration, 112, 113
Toilet covers, 210
Transferring the design, 50

URBINO drug-pot, 104

Umbrellas, embroidered, 200

VELLUM for fan painting, 117

Veteran's room at 7th Regiment Armory, 6
Volkmar, Charles, 107

WALL hangings designed by Mr. Ames Van Wart, 73
Wall papers, English and American, 136
Ward, Marcus, toy-books of, 181
Washing crewel embroidery on linen or crash, 77
Waste baskets, bandanna, 199
sweet grass, 199
rattan, 205
gilt wicker, 206
Wheeler, Miss Dora, 70, 126, 158
Wheeler, Mrs. T. M., founder of Society of Decorative Art, 4
Whitney and Chandler, Misses, decorated ivory ware, 111
Window shades embroidered, a variety of, 189
Woman's Art School, Cooper Union, 18–111
Wood basket, 194
Wood-carving in Cincinnati, 145

YANDELL, his gilded leathers and embossed plushes, 143
Yorkshire oak, 142